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# **Increasing Social Capital for Young Homeless People in Supported Housing**

**A project submitted to Middlesex University  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Professional Studies**

**Samuel Jenfa**

**Institute of Work Based Learning**

**Middlesex University**

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social support, and health was also drawn upon to synthesise the concept of social capital from a professional perspective. In short, I would like to extend a word of appreciation to all scholars and practitioners mentioned with reference to their work and materials.

## Contents

Acknowledgments.....	i
Contents .....	iii
List of Tables and Figures .....	vi
Glossary of Terms.....	vii
Glossary of Place Names.....	xii
Extended Abstract.....	xiv
Chapter 1   Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2   Research Background .....	7
2.1   An Overview of Homelessness .....	7
2.2   The Personal Causes of Homelessness .....	10
2.3   Other Causes of Homelessness .....	13
Chapter 3   Review of the Literature on Social Capital.....	17
3.1   The Concept of Social Capital .....	18
3.2   The Types of Social Capital .....	26
3.3   The Notion of Trust in Social Capital .....	28
3.4   The Social Capital and Policy .....	32
3.5   Social Capital from Professional or Supported Housing Perspective.....	35
3.6   Education and Employment Training and the Development of Social Capital.....	40
3.7   The Benefits and Limitations in Drawing from a Range of Theoretical Positions ..	42
Chapter 4   Methodology .....	44
4.1   Epistemology .....	44
4.2   The Research Methodology: Approach and Data Collection Technique .....	48
4.3   Research Designs Considered .....	54

4.4	Research Questions .....	56
4.6	Research Validity and Triangulation .....	59
4.7	How Action Research was Carried Out.....	61
4.8	Data Management.....	63
Chapter 5	Ethical Compliance.....	65
5.1	General Discussion on Research Ethics.....	65
5.2	The Implementation of the Research Ethic.....	67
6.1	Research Enquiry at the Moonday Project .....	73
6.2	Thematic Analysis .....	77
Chapter 7	Project Analysis and Discussion.....	80
7.1	Analysis of the Key Findings .....	80
7.2	The General Effect of Homelessness on Young People.....	95
7.3	Economic Engagement of Young Homeless People .....	102
7.4	Social Capital and Creating Acceptable Communities for Young People .....	114
Chapter 8	Outcomes .....	128
Chapter 9	Impact of the Outcomes.....	152
Chapter 10	Conclusions.....	161
10.1	Employment.....	164
10.2	Education .....	165
10.3	Improving Social Participation.....	165
10.4	Social Character Building .....	166
10.5	Limitations on Practice and Service Due to National Policy or Initiative .....	167
Chapter 11	Postscripts .....	169
11.1	How Recommendations were Made .....	169
11.2	Appraisal of the Research Findings .....	170
11.3	Experience .....	171

Chapter 12	Epilogue – Reflections on Impact.....	172
12.1	Insight Reflection.....	173
12.2	Foresight .....	174
References	.....	178
Appendix 1	Traffic Light and Recovery Star Chart .....	189
Appendix 2	Research Interview Questions at Moonday Project .....	196
Appendix 3	Agenda for Change Meeting .....	200
Appendix 4	Feedback from Professional from Supported Housing and Homeless Organisations .....	212
Appendix 5	Relevant Previous Articles Written on Social Inclusion As Contribution to Research.....	215
Appendix 6	Report to Management.....	218
Appendix 7	Post-Research Visit to Moonday Project .....	251

## List of Figures and Tables

Figure 3.1	Literature review on social capital .....	18
Figure 4.1	Achieving the research enquiry .....	52
Figure 4.2	Open Question Design – devised for the project enquiry .....	57
Figure 4.3	Closed method of presenting questions.....	58
Figure 6.1	Implementation of research enquiry and procedure .....	74
Figure 6.2	Information collated from the Supported Housing Moonday project.....	76
Table 7.1	Summary of enquiries from staff of the Moonday project.....	81
Table 7.2	The outcome of interviews with the young people at the Moonday project..	83
Figure 7.1	The three-dimensional values of work and their relationship.....	108
Figure 8.1	Links between community workers and clients .....	134
Figure 8.2	Young people in the centre of professional agencies.....	138
Table 8.1	Distinctions between social capital and human capital.....	144
Figure 9.1	Traffic light diagram .....	160
Figure 12.1	Relationship between previous learning and end product.....	176
Figure A1.1	Traffic light.....	189
Table A1.1	Objectives chart.....	190
Figure A1.2	Star chart showing resident’s progress .....	192
Figure A6.1	Network of Support Agencies .....	224
Figure A6.2	Schematic diagram of support .....	227
Figure A6.4:	Star chart showing changes to life.....	245
Table 7.1	Summary of enquiries from staff of the Moonday project.....	81
Table 7.2	The outcome of interviews with the young people at the Moonday Project..	83
Table 8.1	Distinctions between social capital and human capital.....	144





## Glossary of Terms

Terms	Meaning/Explanation
Active citizenship	<p>The term ‘active citizenship’ can be broken down into:</p> <p>Active: Emphasises learning by doing.</p> <p>Citizenship: The status of being a citizen – that is, to being a member of a particular political community or state. Citizenship in this sense brings with it certain rights and responsibilities that are defined in law, such as the right to vote, the responsibility to pay tax and so on. The term ‘citizenship’ is also used to refer to involvement in public life and affairs – that is, to the behaviour and actions of a citizen. It is sometimes known as active citizenship.</p>
Big Society	The idea of bringing people together into network groups to take responsibility for the development of our society.
Bonding	One of the means or types of developing social capital. This type of social capital refers to closeness between two or more people developing personal relationship through frequent association. When pairs or family member or good friends have favourable bonds, the nature of this bonding is usually attributed to ‘good’ interpersonal chemistry.
Bridging	The social capital type that comprises people who have limited networks of family and friends, but who are involved in civic and community life.
Community of practice	<p>Etienne Wenger (1998), connected the definition of community of practice in three dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What it is about – its joint enterprise as understood and continually renegotiated by its members.</li> <li>• How it functions – mutual engagement that bind members together into a social entity.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What capability it has produced – the shared repertoire of communal resources (routines, sensibilities, artefacts, vocabulary, styles, etc.) that members have developed over time. (see also Wenger, 1999: 73-84).</li> </ul> <p>Lave and Wenger relate community of practice to members involved in a set of relationships over time (Lave &amp; Wenger, 1991: 98) and communities developing around things that matter to people (Wenger, 1998). The fact that they are organised around some particular area of knowledge and activity gives members a sense of joint enterprise and identity.</p>
Constructivism	According to an encyclopaedia, this is a learning theory that argues humans construct meaning from current knowledge structures. Constructivism values developmentally appropriate facilitator-supported learning that is initiated and directed by the learner.
Context of funding regime	This is commonly used in a social housing environment to illustrate an organisation's commitment to provision of equitable service delivery to clients in line with the funding requirement.
Epistemology	Episteme is theory that refers to knowledge, while Logos is the aspect of theory concerned with 'reason'. Hence, combining the words produces epistemology. Epistemology is known as the theory of knowledge (a branch of philosophy) that studies the nature, methods, limitations, and validity of knowledge and belief.
Experiential learning	Learning from direct experience; a situated learning that takes place out of class. This type of learning enables learners to reflect and to conceptualise what they have learned for the purpose of recognition or record of achievement.
Hidden	Hidden Homeless are the people co-habiting or staying with

Hhomeless	friends and family. The people in this type of homeless status are hidden from the general public's view. They are not roofless, but they are without a home, and if they cannot find a suitable accommodation they can eventually end up living on the street or in a temporary accommodation.
Homelessness	<p>A person or household will become homeless if they have no accommodation, in England, Wales or Scotland, or have no accommodation which they are legally entitled to occupy.</p> <p>The term is an emotive one that describes images of people that have nowhere to live, also the image of tramps, walking the street or sleeping rough with unhealthy activities such as alcoholism, drug addiction, joblessness and others.</p>
Horizontal knowledge	The knowledge we develop in our everyday lives, which can be useful for finding one's way around, knowing who to ask or how to solve typical problems.
Human capital	The attributes of a person which are productive in an economic context. Often refers to formal educational attainment, with the implication that education is an investment whose returns are in the form of wages, salary, or other compensation. These are normally measured and conceived of as private returns to the individual but can also be social returns.
Independent living skills	<p>This is a situation where a resident of supported housing undergoes informal education/or training programme around tenancy management, job skill, social skill, domestic tasks (cleaning, cooking, laundry, etc) leadership skills, community involvement and empowerment to engage in health services.</p> <p>The main idea is to empower residents with the skills that would enable them to resettle in a permanent accommodation with no or minimum support from support service organisations.</p>
Key working	One-to-one formal or informal meetings between a resident in supported accommodation and their main allocated support

	worker or housing officer. The formal one-to-one meeting arrangement is called structural key working.
Linking	Linking social capital involves social relations with those in authority, which might be used to garner resources or power.
Marginalised group	This is a very complex classification used for people who are not equally represented in certain aspect of services (such as education, health, housing, labour market and others) due to their circumstances.
Meaningful activities	Homelessness residents engaging in daytime activities that will break them away from a ‘dormant way of living to active engagement’ in social gathering, workshop group and economic activities.
Norms and values	Social norms and values, defined by a social group or a nation's shared cultural beliefs (common convictions) and the effects these have on the functioning of society as a whole (Fukuyama, 1995). These norms and values bear on all other forms of social capital.
Outcome star	A chart plotted by an individual to measure the progress they are marking with their aspirations on their recovery journey.
Person-centred support plan	Providing a person receiving support, such as a vulnerable young homeless person, with an opportunity to decide how they want to receive their support, and choice and control over the activities around their support, and the time and place of their support.
Reflexivity	Reflexivity requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process, and an acknowledgment of the impossibility of remaining outside of one's subject matter while conducting research. Reflexivity then, urges us ‘to explore the ways in which a researcher's involvement with a particular study

	<p>influences, acts upon and informs such research’.(Nightingale &amp; Cromby, 1999, p. 228).</p> <p>‘There are two types of reflexivity: personal reflexivity and epistemological reflexivity. “Personal reflexivity” involves reflecting upon the ways in which our own values, experiences, interests, beliefs, political commitments, wider aims in life and social identities have shaped the research. It also involves thinking about how the research may have affected and possibly changed us, as people and as researchers. ‘Epistemological reflexivity’ requires us to engage with questions such as: How has the research question defined and limited what can be ‘found?’ How has the design of the study and the method of analysis ‘constructed’ the data and the findings? How could the research question have been investigated differently?’ (Carla Willig, 2001).</p>
Social capital	Putnam (2000) and Woolcock (2001) both defined social capital as the networks, norms and relationships that build trust and allow people to work together to pursue shared objectives.
Social networks or associational life	Social networks, or associational life, relate to groups and organisations that link individuals belonging to different families or kinship groups in common activities for different purposes (economic, social/cultural and political). These constitute the form of social capital closest to its more common definition of ‘networks of civic engagement’, linked to the concept of ‘local or community-level or local interest association’s.
Structured support network model	A simple support network model that entails combination of two or more professionals from different backgrounds to support a vulnerable person to achieve their goals and aspirations on issues relevant to their health.

## Glossary of Place Names

Brainfield College	An anonymised local college at Sunnyside Town Council. The College is working with the assessment panel made up of a housing officer, police support worker from Moonday project and social worker (if need be) to determine whether a young homeless person should be nominated for temporary accommodation at Moonday project for two years. The College also supporting the provision of training and education (both informal and formal learning) to young people at Moonday College.
Moonday Supported Housing	An anonymised temporary accommodation service where young people are receiving support. The service was based at Sunnyside Town Council, in a city situated outside London. The project was carried out with staff and young homeless people from Moonday project. The findings and outcomes of the research were fully utilised for this project report.
Rise and Happyside County	An anonymised place where the Moonday project was established and provided supported accommodation to young people before temporarily relocated to Sunnyside Town due to refurbishment of the building and to repair the damage done by previous tenants (young people) of the service.
Sunnyside Town Council	The anonymised local borough named in the project as one of the external collaborators. It offered to provide training and voluntary work for the young people and also invited young people from Moonday Supported Housing to local consultations.
Supported Housing Ltd	Anonymised national housing association responsible for service provision at Moonday Supported Housing and Turnaround Project.
Turnaround Project	Anonymised name of the first project based in London (young ex-offenders' project) where the research was based, initially set up with six young people first interviewed and two staff participating in the

	<p>action research through collaborative enquiry. However, the outcome and findings cannot be fully utilised due to the low numbers of participants as well as the event that led to the closure of the project in early 2010.</p>
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## **Extended Abstract**

This project focused on how increasing social capital enhances the well-being of young homeless people, as reported in Chapter 8 of this project.

The research re-examined the concept of homelessness from both the theoretical and practical views of vulnerable homeless people. In effect, the effect of homelessness on the well-being of young people was explored from the points of view of socio-economic participation and community engagement.

The project also evaluates the concept of social capital from various perspectives, such as theoretical views, policy context and from the realm of supported housing and the professional sphere.

This project discusses how increasing social capital in supported housing can improve the well-being of young homeless people from the perspectives of health, social and economic engagements. This is a different approach from that arguing that homelessness is commonly associated with a range of other social circumstances, beyond the simple need for shelter (Fitzpatrick, Kemp & Klinker, 2000; Third & Yanetta, 2000).

Literature research and enquiries with homeless people and other participants confirmed that vulnerable homeless people in supported housing encounter many problems beyond a lack of suitable accommodation, and most of these problems are social disadvantages such as reduced access to private and public services, healthcare, education, and not being seen as suitable for employment, and general rejection or discrimination from other people. The Shelter report on homelessness (2007) highlighted that helping homeless people (with personal factors) to resolve their problems could become a complex situation and, as such, requires support from specialist agency services, supported housing,

family support, friends, and day centre services. Therefore, this report argues from a theoretical and professional perspective, as well as within a policy context, that the concept of social capital is central to features of social life — networks, norms and trust — that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives (Putnam, 1995: 664–665).

In order to provide evidence for how increasing social capital in supported housing can enhance the well-being of homeless young adults, adults and older people, as well as their pertinent contribution to community, we carried out the review of the wider issues around social capital from theoretical, policy and professional perspectives. This shows how this research project has drawn its theoretical and practical understanding from the review of academic literature.

This project explores the contribution made by policymakers to the concept of social capital and, in particular, its effect on vulnerable homeless people. The literature review also examines the work produced by professionals on social capital by using the example of the research document on Dream Deferred (Lemos & Durkacz, 2002) to justify how social networks can help vulnerable people to rebuild their relationship with old friends and families. Woolcock (2001) suggests that a social capital framework also provides a base for bridging and linking ties to existing resources that could be used to do something about weaknesses and the nature of external resources that may complement these existing resources.

Three main types of social capital were identified in this research: bonding social capital (e.g. among family members or ethnic groups); bridging social capital (e.g. across ethnic groups); and linking social capital (e.g. between different social classes).

Berkman and Syme (1979) clarified the benefit of social networks to vulnerable people and the need to promote social networks through at least five primary pathways: (1) from provision of social support, (2) social influence, (3) social engagement, (4) person-to-person contact, and (5) access to resources and material goods.

For this project the action research approach was considered an appropriate means of investigating how ‘increasing in social capital can support the integration of young people into the community and in the process, its contribution to community’.

The framework and the structure of the research question were determined following the preliminary planning and project consultation with Supported Housing Ltd. The framework for the research questions was designed to obtain information from the participants, such as staff of Supported Housing Ltd, and to be used in conjunction with the interviews with their residents and the chief executives of Thames Reach Housing.

The application of an action research approach assisted with the findings around the following:

- Exclusion of young homeless people from employment;
- Stigmatisation imposed on homeless people and their exclusion from the wider community as a result of historical crimes by previous young homeless people; and
- Exclusion of young homeless people from local consultation on development and new initiatives.

The effect of homelessness on young people was extensively covered in the research in the areas of health and economic status. The effect of homelessness on health is not confined to rough sleepers, but extends to other categories of homelessness.

A solution was developed in this project to confirm that social capital can be maximised for young homeless people in supported housing through the implementation of:

- a structured support network model in the context of specialist health professionals working together to promote the physical and mental health of the young people according to their needs;
- support plan tools;
- an employment service and education service through joint working with local employers and local colleges to support the socio-economic engagement of the young people.

This project identified how joint working between support agencies from specialist services from health, education, Local Authority, and supported housing could make a difference in the life of people. For example, Narayan and Pritchett argued that people should work together as cohesive groups in order to achieve their objectives through rules and obligations embedded in social capital. In effect, they suggest that ‘the rules, norms, obligations, reciprocity and trust embedded in social relations, social structures and society’s institutional arrangements... enable members to achieve their individual and community objectives’ (Narayan & Pritchett, 1997).

This project report was concluded by recommending an action plan on how an increase in social capital can be achieved for young homeless people in supported housing. The relevant support service provisions include health promotion, education and employment, financial capacity, and social networks that integrate young people into community-integrated services and promote their well-being through social inclusion — the aspects of health promotion, human capital (skills and training to engage in the labour

market), social engagement in the community, developing new relationships in society, and getting involved with the local agenda through consultation.

The physical manifestation of this project saw an increase in numbers of young homeless people at the Moonday Supported Housing project in employment, education and training and their involvement in the local consultation. The outcomes also include the design of outcome star toolkits that motivate young homeless people to identify their needs and the measurement of the progress they are making through person-centred action.

# **Chapter 1      Introduction**

This project focuses on increasing social capital to enhance the well-being of young homeless people, as reported in Chapter 8 of this project. The research re-examines the concept of homelessness from both the theoretical and practical views of vulnerable homeless people. In effect, the effect of homelessness on well-being will be explored from the points of view of socio-economic participation and community engagement.

The project evaluates the concept of social capital from various perspectives such as theoretical views, policy context and the realm of supported housing and the professional sphere. It was argued through the literature review and the research findings that the benefits of social capital to well-being and the community can be found in the collective value of all ‘social networks’ and that these networks (if balanced) can have a positive impact upon people’s education, employment and social life prospects. Putnam described social capital as:

Features of social life – networks, norms and trust – that enable participations to act together more effectively to pursue shared connections and the attendant norms and trust. (Putnam 1995)

This project investigates the current level or forms of social capital building in supported housing and how young homeless people can be assisted into the wider society or community through networking with their Housing Support Workers and specialist agencies. In effect, a distinction will be made in Chapter 3 of this project between bonding social capital, bridging social capital and linking social capital.

The inter-agency relationship that helps young people into independent living was examined through a discussion that encompasses effective networking, sharing of knowledge and working in a legitimate peripheral participation. Wenger (1998), in work

on community of practice, made us understand that learning and working through participation in groups and engagement with the 'daily round' can make the outcome of interagency work informative and of interest.

The main discussion of this project did not hide from the fact that the structure of networking can produce weak ties if not balanced, while some relationships can be categorised as strong ties. Therefore, this project will explore the benefits of both strong and weak ties in networking. Granovetter's theory states that your closest associates are likely to have the same information as you have. By contrast, more distant acquaintances are more likely to have something new for you. Granovetter's paper, published in 1973, used job searching as its example: your close friends are more likely to know about the same job openings that you do.

In conclusion, this project argues that increasing social capital in supported housing will resolve the social exclusion that young homeless people face. The successful implementation of the work placement programme recommended towards the end of this thesis will make a significant contribution to the community in terms of crime reduction, creating meaningful activities for young people to break their idleness. Janunkar and Kapucinski (1992: 59) maintained that a lack of engagement could make the young idle and encourage tendencies to engage in criminal activities.

The aims of this project are to ascertain:

- How far, if at all, can social capital resolve the effect of homelessness on the health of young homeless people?
- Does the impact of anti-social behaviour affect the relationship between homeless people and the wider community?

- To what extent can social capital, in close relationship with human capital, improve the socio-economic well-being of vulnerable homeless people through networks of support agencies such as Brainfield College, Connexion and Sunnyside Town Council?
- Can social capital in supported housing give young people a voice through consultation on local initiatives, partnership work and community dialogue?

The outcomes of this project, responding to the above questions through research findings, led to the development of a report to the senior management that was accepted by senior managers in supported housing.

In addition, this project provides an opportunity to run a training programme on the use of the recovery star chart with staff as a result of designing a measuring tool for this project.

Permission was sought and received from the Chartered Institute of Housing to go ahead with this research project work, following its consideration of the written material submitted. Therefore, the research project complied with the standard research ethics requirement of Middlesex University and CIH's Code of Professional Conduct and statutory regulations in working with vulnerable young homeless people within the context of Safeguarding Adults and possession of valid CRB Enhanced Documents.

The name of the organisation and participants in this project are anonymised throughout this project report.

### ***The outcomes***

The system designed in Chapter 8 shows how social capital can be enhanced through a network of support agencies. The system clearly states how specialist agencies should work together with frontline support workers to share professional knowledge, with the



practical orientation of this joint working to promote accessibility of the young homeless people as well as to strengthen the social engagement of young homeless people in the community.

The project established how the effective use of support plans, the outcome star model and the design of traffic light chart enables people to set objectives around their well-being and the progress they are making in the areas of their needs. The support plan was reviewed for all the participants in the interviews and the team leader feedback in which the implementation of the recommendations including education, social network, faith, family reunion, confidence building and trust, and managing health had impacted significantly and beneficially on the lives of young people.

The project recommended education, training and employment, and a quality support plan using a person-centred approach to be added onto the organisation's key performance indicators, which is to improve the service quality and to assist staff in empowering young people to connect to the wider community. To this end, a senior professional in social housing commented at the conclusion of this project that providing homeless people with opportunities to engage in the labour market requires basic skills. Generally, he felt that the work was an interesting piece of research that illustrated the importance of a person-centred approach and its benefits, as well as how there is some way further to go before the priorities of the service user become central to the care planning and case management process.

This project also established an increase in the numbers of young homeless people from Supported Housing engaging with paid and unpaid work, as a result of recommendations made to the Moonday project to work with the employment organisations and the local college (anonymised in the project as Brainfield College). The

organisation established a team of staff known as employment and integrated social inclusion workers to support the young people in entering into unpaid work within the organisation, as well as in securing paid jobs outside the supported housing organisation for their young tenants.

## **Summary of the Project Activities**

Research enquiries were carried out across two schemes by the same organisation, known as Supported Housing Ltd, namely the ex-offender service (also known as the Turnaround Project) and young people service (known in this project as the Moonday project).

The project activities focused on the young people service, with the outcome meeting the aims identified above and centred on the Supported Housing Moonday project. The recommendations and implementation programme for future change will entail joint working between myself as a consultant, the Supported Housing management team and Sunnyside Town Council. Thus, the project sought to address the problems identified (from the project aims) through:

- Healthy living promotion as a result of joint working between support workers and specialist workers;
- Social skills and support that will entail helping young people to engage with other people in the community;
- Improving employment opportunities for young homeless people in supported housing through the provision of work placements to be provided by Sunnyside Town Council and in conjunction with Brainfield College to start with, but with the aim of orchestrating businesses to sign up for this programme in future;
- Creating an acceptable environment for young homeless people through consultation on local community initiatives to be supported by Sunnyside Town Council and the intergenerational pilot scheme. Prior to the project enquiry or

interviews with staff and residents of supported housing in Sunnyside Town Council, those young homeless people interviewed said that they had been marginalised because nobody wanted to listen to them. They said that they wanted the community to recognise their voice by providing them with consultation on any local or community agenda; and

- Reviewing the support plan and outcome measuring tools — encompassing health improvement, employment, education and training, independent living skills, self-care, hygiene and responsibility, social networks, family relationships, self-confidence, hope and trust, behaviour and living in the community, managing tenancy, and financial management — in order to ensure that social capital is maximised in supported housing and for its impact to make a significant contribution to the community.

Finally, the recommendations for the outcome of the project — ‘increasing social capital in supported housing and in process, its contribution to the community’ — will be fulfilled. In this way, it appears that increasing social capital in supported housing is primarily concerned with implementing a structure in the support service for vulnerable homeless people. Its ultimate achievements would include health improvements, enhancement of learning skills to engage in the labour market, and active participation in the community. Increasing social capital in supported housing and, in the process, its contribution to the community will break the economic and social exclusion cycle that homeless people face. The successful implementation of the programme will make a significant contribution to the community in terms of crime reduction, creating meaningful activities for the young people to break their idleness. Therefore, increasing social capital in supported housing should be perceived as an agenda for changing life.

## **Chapter 2      Research Background**

The research background will explore the definition of homelessness from the historical context of UK policy. This chapter will also examine the causes of homelessness and its effect on people's well-being.

### **2.1 An Overview of Homelessness**

Authors such as Burrows (1997), Hutson and Clapham (1999), Fitzpatrick et al. (2000), Third and Yanetta (2000), and Anderson and Tulloch (2000) have shed light on what is being classified as homelessness within the UK social-cultural orientation.

The above authors clarified that a home for one person may have a different meaning from that of another person experiencing a similar situation. To this end, Fitzpatrick et al. (2000: 78) have proposed the following circumstances as falling within the definitions of homelessness:

- Rooflessness (also termed street homelessness or 'rough sleeping');
- Temporary accommodation for homeless people in the hostels/night shelters/emergency unit;
- Living long-term in institutions because no other accommodation is available;
- 'Bed and Breakfast' or similar accommodation, unsuitable for the long term;
- Informal/insecure/impermanent accommodation with friends, or under eviction notice (notice to quit), or squatting; and
- Intolerable physical conditions, including overcrowding.

Anderson went further to emphasise that the UK legal definition of homelessness was introduced in 1977 (and was consolidated in later legislation) for statutory procedures. He

described homelessness as that of households that do not have accommodation that they can legally occupy in England and Wales or Scotland. The accommodation must be reasonable for the household to continue to occupy the accommodation. He, therefore, further established that a:

person or household can be categorised as being homeless if they have accommodation but cannot secure entry to it, if occupation of the accommodation carries a threat of violence or if the accommodation is of a mobile type and there is nowhere available to place and live in the accommodation. (Anderson, 1994: 2, after Housing Act, 1985: 58)

Homelessness refers to people who cannot stay in a dwelling, house and accommodation because they cannot pay their rent. People in this category cannot maintain a regular and safe environment as a result of their circumstances. Homelessness also extends to those people that live in a temporary accommodation or supported housing.

The people in supported housing encounter many problems other than a lack of suitable accommodation; most of these problems are social disadvantages such as:

- Reduced access to private and public services;
- Reduced access to healthcare;
- Very serious dental problems;
- Limited access to education;
- Increased risk of suffering from violence and abuse;
- General rejection or discrimination from other people;
- Not being seen as suitable for employment; and
- Reduced access to communications technology, such as telephones and the Internet.

- The Shelter research findings ('Reaching Out' consultation to homeless people, 2007) established the general causes of homelessness as being personal and structural reasons. The Shelter report described how some people can become homeless as a result of their personal circumstances and social factors.

The Homelessness Act, 2002, put responsibility on local housing authorities to secure housing for homeless people, as described above. The Act requires local housing authorities to develop a strategic approach to enable them to tackle homelessness in individual boroughs. In effect, local authorities have a legal duty to secure housing for a household or person within the following criteria:

- They were homeless according to the above definition;
- The household contained a member deemed in priority need;
- They had a local connection with the authority to which they were applying (e.g. through current or previous residence, employment or family ties); and
- The person or household had not become homeless intentionally (i.e. due to a deliberate act or omission on the part of a household member).

Households deemed to be in priority need under the legislation included:

- Those where there were dependent children in the care of the household;
- Those with an expectant mother;
- Those with physical or mental health problems, a threat of violence; or for young people aged 16–17 years, the risk of sexual or financial exploitation.

Due to the impact of the Housing Act, 1996, access to council housing for homeless households in Britain for many years was determined by household composition as well as housing circumstances (Anderson, 1997: 116). Local authorities were not obliged to assist homeless households that did not fall within the priority groups, and it was largely single people (without dependent children) who were excluded from the 'safety net' provisions.

Watson, Drake and Anderson raised concerns in their work about how Local Authority housing units classified a group of people in priority need and others with non-priority housing need. They strongly condemned the classification of housing priority as a way of excluding accessibility of other people from social housing. To this end, they highlighted the extent to which the division between priority and non-priority homeless households was categorised by the exclusion of non-family households from social housing, and was a key factor in explaining why street homelessness, in particular, was almost exclusively experienced by single people (Watson, 1986; Drake, 1989; Anderson, 1997).

## **2.2 The Personal Causes of Homelessness**

Examples of personal reasons for homelessness can thus be categorised as follows:

### ***Homelessness due to breakdown of relationship with family, parents and partners in most cases***

The long-term breakdown of a relationship may go on for many years before a reunion can be negotiated through mediation workers. Some breakdowns of family relationships may be a lifelong experience. It will be argued later in this project that family relationships are perhaps the most important sources for us all, according to an ESRC project on Family Life and Social Capital ([www1.lsbu.ac.uk/families/](http://www1.lsbu.ac.uk/families/)).

A Crisis research report (2000) established that the cause of homelessness is widely accepted as a relationship and family breakdown due to disputes with parents, domestic abuse, marital breakdown or bereavement, and such breakdowns could result in family ties being cut and the homeless person being subjected to social isolation and informal support from friends and family members.

***Homelessness as a result of people leaving institutional living such as the armed forces, prison and social care***

As will be discussed in a later stage of this project report, all the tenants of the Supported Housing Ltd Turnaround Project became homeless as a result of criminal convictions or probation orders imposed on them. Broadway's (2009) 'Street to Home' annual report for London confirmed that 34 per cent of rough sleepers in London have previously been in prison, with around one third of those prisoners not living in permanent accommodation prior to their imprisonment. The same report also established that up to one third of prisoners lose their home while they are in prison. People coming out of such institutional living tend to be cut off from family networks, friends, the health service, community engagement, and employment programmes as a result of their previous history and labels attached to them by the wider society following their completed sentence. For example, Social Exclusion Unit (July 2002) — Reducing Re-offending by Ex-offender, p. 56, paragraph 8.12 — established that 'ex-prisoners are more likely to have had disturbed childhoods, problems at school, literacy problems, a family history of criminality, mental health problems, unemployment, drug and alcohol problems and a history of homelessness in comparison to the rest of the population'.

There are also categories of homelessness that can be caused by parent(s) being assessed as incapable of looking after their children. In these cases they will lose their parenthood and right to look after their children to a foster care family or children's home through a legal order. The young person under a social care order can only stay with a foster family until the end of their seventeenth year and must then transfer to other temporary accommodation where they can live until they are 22 years old. At this time they will be discharged from social care duty. The whole episode of moving from one accommodation to another temporary placement under different social care packages could



lead to a young person becoming vulnerable. For example, Randall and Brown (1999) in 'Prevention is Better than Cure', said that the lack of stability associated with being in care can restrict care leavers to lower levels of educational participation and attainment and higher levels of mental health problems. The restriction on education can lead to problems in future, meaning that those in care might face problems not only when they leave care but in later life. Also, care leavers might tend to have unstable career patterns. Added to this, around two thirds of young people in care have left home by the age of 18, in contrast to the average age of leaving home at 22. This means that care leavers have to attempt the transition to independence at a much younger age than other people and, therefore, might lack independent living skills.

### ***Homelessness due to health problems***

Many people became homeless due to a health crisis or mental health breakdown. The majority of homeless people suffer from mental health problems with the history of a repeated or frequent crisis such as self-harm, suicide attempts and other mental health breakdowns, as opposed to the rest of the population.

Reports from some frontline homelessness organisations confirm the higher rate of mental health crises among homeless people in comparison to the rest of the population. Broadway (2009, [http://www.crisis.org.uk/\\_js/tinymce/2.1.1.2](http://www.crisis.org.uk/_js/tinymce/2.1.1.2)) established that 35 percent of the people sleeping rough in London have mental health support needs, with rough sleepers being 35 times more likely to commit suicide than the general population (see also Crisis report, 1996, 'Still Dying for a Home').

In addition to the above, Crisis' (2009) 'Street to Home' annual report established that the homeless population has double the level of common mental health problems of the general population. The Crisis report emphasised that psychosis is 4–15 times more

prevalent in the homeless population. It is reasonable to suggest that homeless people undergoing mental health problems will therefore need to live in a specialist homeless project in order to receive support for their problem. The stages at which homeless people with mental health needs receive support from staff from supported housing and other agencies around their well-being are called the recovery journey.

Fitzpatrick et al. (2000) made it known that the problems the homeless people are facing are not limited to what someone in the construction industry will refer to as 'bricks and mortar', but that their needs are more to do with associated psycho-social norms. It is recognised that homelessness is commonly associated with a range of other social circumstances or problems beyond the simple need for shelter (Fitzpatrick, Kemp & Klinker, 2000; Third & Yanetta, 2000). The Shelter report on homelessness (2007) highlighted that helping homeless people to resolve their personal problems can become a complex situation and, as such, requires support from specialist agency services, supported housing, family support, friends, and day centre services. In essence, it can be emphasised further that one person or one social business (or organisation) cannot be the only player to support a homeless person, as the complexity requires interagency workers with specialist knowledge (from theoretical or experiential learning, or a combination of both), pooling their network of resources to help the individual homeless person to resolve his or her needs. Part of the funding criteria for Supporting People is that supported housing must work in partnership with external agencies in order to point their residents or homeless people to the right place for support that will meet their needs.

### **2.3 Other Causes of Homelessness**

The most common causes of homelessness in the capital, according to Ravenhill's 'Routes into Homelessness' (Social Exclusion Unit 2000), are the structural causes. The structural

causes of homelessness are those types of homelessness that are triggered by economic and social factors and thus outside the control of the individual or family concerned. The structural causes of homelessness may include: unemployment, poverty, a lack of affordable housing, housing policies, and the structure and administration of housing benefit.

Homelessness includes people fleeing from domestic violence and drug and alcohol abuse. They require help from housing support providers and specialist agencies such as drug and alcohol rehabilitation programmes, and victim support projects for people fleeing domestic violence or natural disasters overseas. The support providers integrate them into the community and assist them in building the confidence to relate to other people in the community as a result of them being a victim of circumstances. Thus, it should be noted, both work and decent housing integrate people into society.

An interview conducted in January 2009 with Jeremy Swain, the Chief Executive Officer of Thames Reach — one of the largest homeless organisations in London — hinted that homeless people, regardless of their category, required integration into the community through enablement and support from providers of housing support service, specialist agency workers, agencies facilitating family reunion, the reconnection of homeless people with friends, and new connections with people who can add to the well-being of vulnerable homeless people. During the one-off homelessness enquiry meeting, Swain went so far as to refer to the Dream Deferred project published by Lemos and Crane (2002). Dream Deferred was a research project funded by the Ashden Trust. It established that social exclusion and institutionalisation do not prevent homeless people from valuing intimacy, friendships and family connections. In one way, the report went further to emphasise how homeless people can be helped out of exclusion through networks of support and

connections to new and old friends. The report recommends the use of family mediation to resolve relationship breakdown, the most commonly cited cause of homelessness. The research outcome also suggested that continued contact with friends and family helps to prevent individuals from depending on street culture.

Swain used the outcome of the Dream Deferred project report to reach out to other support providers, advising them to include social networks as an essential part of their service. He said:

This valuable report clearly illustrates the high priority given by homeless people to rebuilding and strengthening their social networks. The message from them to organisations working with homeless people is clear – make this an essential part of the service you offer.

In this case, Swain was advocating the use of social networks as a vehicle for promoting the well-being of marginalised homeless people by reconnecting them to their family, friends and community.

The Crisis research report (2000) on Homelessness and Loneliness reported that social isolation preceded homelessness, with the experience of homelessness then exacerbating that isolation. The Crisis report also highlighted that:

Informal support, such as that provided by family members and friends, can be extremely valuable for all of us, but they can be especially key to a better future for someone with experiences of homelessness. (Crisis, 2000: 5)

This project will investigate how social capital in supported housing can enhance the well-being of homeless people in aspects of their health, economic and social engagement. Chapter 4 of this project will look at the benefits of social capital to individuals and groups

of people and, in the process, its contribution to the community through a literature review of theoretical, government policy and professional perspectives.

It is normal for a vulnerable resident with a history of social exclusion to need to see evidence of trust, understanding, values, and empathy from their key worker before they can actively engage with the necessary support services. According to the Crisis report (2000), the chaotic lifestyle of former homeless persons may at times make it difficult for such residents to engage with the necessary services. However, the practical orientation of this project will be designed to examine how vulnerable people in second-stage supported housing utilise the assistance made available (by networks of support agencies) to enhance their independent living, as well as to achieve a fulfilling lifestyle in the community following a programme of resettlement processing (Broadway, 2009, annual report).

## **Chapter 3      Review of the Literature on Social Capital**

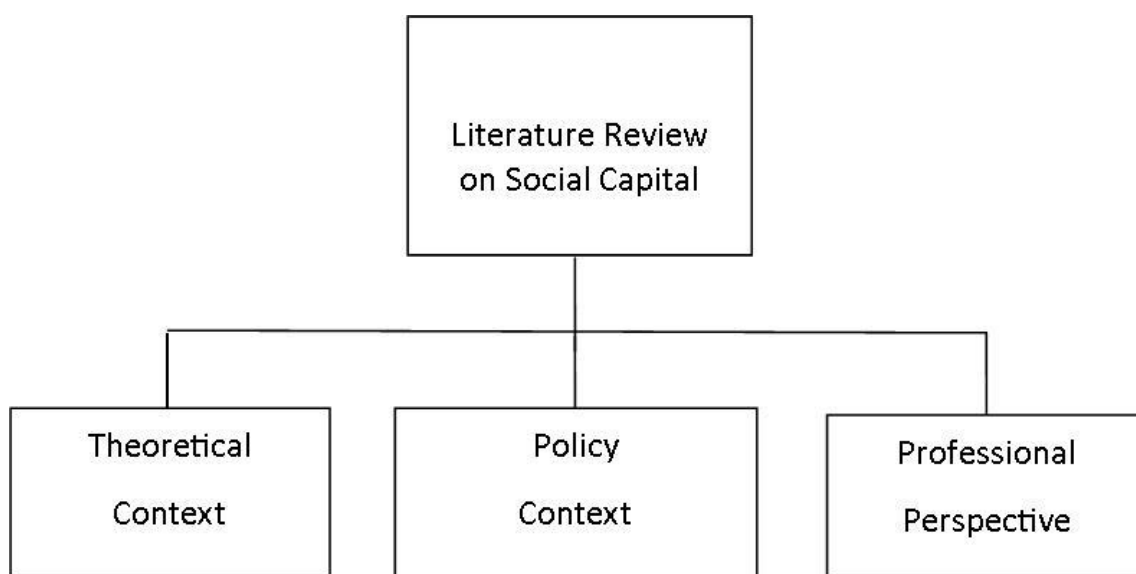
This chapter reviews the literature pertinent to the research into increasing social capital in supported housing.

In order to provide evidence for how increasing social capital in supported housing will enhance the well-being of homeless young adults, adults and older people, as well as their contribution to community, it is important to review the wider issues from theoretical, policy and professional perspectives, as can be deduced from Figure 3.1 below. This shows how this research project has drawn its theoretical and practical understanding from the review of academic literature. This project explores the contribution made by policymakers to the concept of social capital and, in particular, its effect on vulnerable homeless people. The literature review also examines the work produced by professionals on social capital by using the example of the research document on Dream Deferred (Lemos & Durkacz, 2002) to justify how social networks can help vulnerable people to rebuild their relationship with old friends and families.

Lemos and Durkacz clearly based the outcome of their work (the Dream Deferred project) on how social networks can support the residents of supported housing for the young and adults alike to break the trends of homelessness by extending their bonding to groups of people apart from their homeless network. The project concluded with the following findings to justify how social networks can help homeless people to reshape their lives:

- They feel the loss of broken relationships;
- They are keen to re-establish some broken ties with family members;
- They want to make new friends;

- They value the support of staff in discussing their problems and helping them think about how to address them; and
- They need support in thinking of places and activities where they can meet new people and make new friends, perhaps even meeting new partners.



**Figure 3.1 Literature review on social capital**

### **3.1 The Concept of Social Capital**

Social capital came into limelight for the first time through the work of Lyda Judson Hanifan on rural school community centres in 1916 and 1920. Hanifan described social capital as ‘those tangible substances that count for most in the daily lives of people’ (1916: 130). Hanifan’s idea of social capital originated from observing exchanges of goodwill, fellowship, sympathy, and social interaction between those who ‘make up a social unit’. It can be perceived that Hanifan was referring to the interaction of people through caring and gathering together for social interest and support. Hanifan argued that social capital was needed to increase participation and success of the schools in the community (Hanifan, 1916). Hanifan used his compelling argument on social interaction to imply a difference

from physical capital, telling the readers of his famous journal article that, while social capital does not have tangible substance such as property, real estate or money, figuratively it virtually represents people's social assets. The social interaction of people is widely understood in groups of homeless people who bond together for mutual support, offering support to their street partners through sympathy and with common understanding of their circumstances. However, it will be argued in Chapter 7 that this type of bonding is a weak form of social capital; as such, social groups of homeless people or disadvantaged groups cannot improve the economic status of their members unless they engage with support networks of agencies or stronger ties that can link them to the wider community or services such as access to housing information, job opportunities, and so on. Similarly, Woolcock (2001: 13–14) suggests that a social capital framework provides a base for bridging and linking ties to existing resources that can be used to reinforce support and create accessibility to external resources as a complement to the existing resources.

The above discussion on ties can be related to the social and caring environment in supported housing, where the social unit entails interaction between marginalised homeless people and housing and support professionals, thereby connecting them with specialist agencies to address their support needs in health, welfare benefits, social activities, education, and employment opportunities. Without deviating from the original concept, it can be seen that the term 'social capital' became well known through the contributions of scholarly writers on the social involvement of individuals and groups of people. For instance, in relation to urban life and neighbourliness, Jacobs (1961) advocated the implementation of an urban renewal policy with emphasis on self-generating urban forces to create social and economic diversity and personal well-being. Thus, Jacobs's work is useful for this research project because it stressed socio-economic engagement, and in a similar way vulnerable people being included in the group that needs support to access



such benefits. Jacobs' work will contribute to this project in terms of the development in Chapter 7 of the topic of creating an acceptable community for the homeless and recommendations for enhancing the well-being of marginalised homeless people through increasing social capital in supported housing.

The concept of social capital can be reviewed to show how the social context translates the idea into academic debates through the work of Pierre Bourdieu in the 1970s and 1980s on social theory. Bourdieu describes social capital as an 'aggregate of the potential resources linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition' (Bourdieu, 1983: 249). He clarified that access to social capital was through the development of well-established or sustained relationships and networks of resources associated with high-profile groups with the possession of stocks of economic and cultural capital.

What Bourdieu described above is useful to this project in terms of how social capital can be embedded in the support programme for homeless people in order to connect them to the potential community resources that can produce wider benefits and generate socio-economic interest. In a nutshell, institutionalised relationships cannot give vulnerable homeless people enough confidence to integrate or associate with the wider society for their socio-economic advantage.

James Coleman's study of social capital is significant in the academic arena and the world of social research. For instance, Coleman relied on the outcome of his empirical studies of youth and schooling to argue for the concept of social capital as a range of entities consisting of social structures and facilitating certain actions of actors — whether personal or corporate actors — within the structure (Coleman, 1988). Coleman therefore argued that the structure of relations produced obligations between participants, with a

strong tendency to create a reliable social environment open to distribution of information and norms, and for all members of the group to abide by the imposed sanctions on forms of social behaviours, as expected by the network group (Coleman, 1988: 102–104). He called for relations to be strictly embedded in a social structure with good characteristics. For Coleman, social structure becomes social capital when participants engage in using social networks in a positive and unselfish way to pursue their interests (Coleman, 1990: 305). In short, it must be emphasised that the pursuit of social interest should always be made available through resources that benefit everyone in the network group.

The work of Coleman, particularly on aspects of character formation, is a very useful source of theoretical information for this project. It guides the making of recommendations to assist young homeless people in supported housing to address, through character rebuilding, the exclusionary sanctions imposed on them as a result of their past behaviour. This project made recommendations on social character in terms of how the vulnerable young homeless people will need to prove to employers and other community groups that they are now of good conduct and able to work and interact with other people in the community.

Moreover, Narayan made a notable contribution to social capital in arguing that people should work together as a cohesive group in order to achieve common objectives through rules and obligations that are embedded in social capital (Narayan & Pritchett, 1997). This is emphasised further when relating to groups of people coming together to find solutions to the problems in their community, mostly in relation to socio-economic divides — particularly those around employment, community amenities, health services, and crime reduction. Narayan's suggestion will be reflected in the current work, in which recommendations will be made on improving the social participation of young homeless

people for this project. In this case, the research project will argue that inviting vulnerable young homeless people to community consultations is a form of social capital in which people from different groups or networks come together with common objectives and a shared vision to engage in a dialogue so as to find solutions to problems. The young people will join other people in a collective network to engage with community issues through the sharing of objectives, norms, reciprocity, and organisation. The core values and resources are embedded in the shared vision and with an obligation to achieve a common objective central to the group's or network's resources. The combined efforts of people in the network group work towards a shared vision for social advantage through the notion of trust. Putnam referred to this level of social interaction as a 'composite social capital where features of social life networks, norms and trust enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives... (so that) social capital refers to social connections and the attendant norms and trust' (Putnam, 1993: 167). By contrast, physical capital and human capital are essentially the property of individuals; social capital belongs to groups, as Fukuyama and Coleman have made us understand (Fukuyama, 1995; Coleman, 1998). Social capital is a 'property' that exists in relationships between actors drawn upon to facilitate joint activities. In supported housing, it is the expectation that the service will work with the network of support agencies or practitioners with trust, norms and reciprocity to find solutions to the problems of the people they are jointly supporting with the common objectives and information protocol.

The work of Field on social capital and lifelong learning shall be used to get to the understanding of the term 'social capital'. In a way the term 'social capital' is used to denote the benefit of resources people derive from a mutual relationship. It is for this reason that Field made a reference to the work of Robert Putnam to explain what is meant by the term. Putnam's idea could therefore be echoed in the work of Field (2005) on Social

Capital and Lifelong Learning in this literature review, wherein social capital is built particularly through civic engagement, which appears to be more or less synonymous with active citizenship. In this instance, Field went further to explain the connection between the network of social groups and citizenship through the notable work of Putnam, in which active citizenship is an important source of social capital because it is the main way in which people — particularly those who are strangers to one another — experience reciprocity through their pursuit of shared objectives.

This aspect of work from Field will offer much support to this research project in terms of how vulnerable people can use their network of support agencies and new connections to become more active in the community, making a contribution to their community-wide agenda through trust. Again, Field made reference to how people can maintain their relationship and values through ‘faith’ in one another, but he was strongly interested in how a group of people with social interest can achieve their objectives through trust and collective cooperation. He reminded the followers of his epistle (on social capital and lifelong learning) that the objectives shared among people can help to develop a solid web of networks underpinned by common values, producing high levels of social trust that, in turn, foster further cooperation between people and reduce the chances of malfeasance (Putnam, 2000). Malfeasance in this case refers to a situation in which someone takes advantage of their power or strong involvement with the public for their own personal gain, but Putnam suggests that this can be minimised in a situation where there is a notion of social trust among people.

Putnam has played a leading role in popularising the concept of social capital. Field’s work on social capital and lifelong learning embraced the idea of social organisations being reinforced on trust, norms and efficiency in order to have a strong

social capital that will be meaningful to social groups. Coming close to Field's idea is the work of Putnam, which he cited as 'features of social organisations, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions' (Putnam, 1993: 167). Putnam also used the outcome of another work on the study of American civil society to modify his definition of social capital and this to include 'features of social life – networks, norms, and trust that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives' (Putnam, 1995: 664–665). This time around, he identified 'participants' instead of 'society' as the beneficiaries of social capital. In his article 'Bowling Alone', Putnam argued that 'the core idea of social capital is that social networks have value... social contacts affect the productivity of individuals and groups'. He referred to social capital as 'connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them' (Putnam, 2000: 19).

Chapter 7 of this research will establish how homeless people, regardless of their circumstances, integrate into society and become able to improve their well-being through networks of support agencies, development of new contact and reconnection to family and old friends.

The density of networks of support agencies could have a strong influence on the level of integration of vulnerable homeless people in supported housing into community-based activities such as health, education, employment and training, and social activities. For example, Lin refers to these connections as 'the social relationships that could exist between individual groups, organisations, communities, regions and nations that serve as a resource to produce positive outcomes in relation to social capital' (Lin, Cook & Burt, 2001: 127–158). The weight attributed to networks of support agencies can be measured in terms of numbers of opportunities and services available for young homeless people.

According to Field (2003), social capital promotes connections between individuals or groups of people; in keeping them going over time, people are able to work together to achieve things that they either could not achieve by themselves or could only achieve with great difficulty. He explained further that people connect through a series of networks and that they tend to share common values with other members of these networks; to the extent that these networks constitute a resource, they can be seen as a form of capital.

Yet again, Field (2005) demonstrated, to an extent, that social capital is a like old wine in a new bottle: he referred to how people are now using ‘social capital’ as a term for ‘community’ or ‘neighbourhood’. In a metaphorical expression, Field used an example of old wine being ‘a classy vintage’, whereas the new bottle does add a bit of value. Social capital is likened to how people cherished a new thing above the old and, for this reason, Field had clarified what he perceived as new in the concept of social capital being mainly how social connections and networks of resources help people to advance their interests through cooperation with each other. Field clarified that the only way social capital could make sense was to link it with lifelong learning (education), as it provides people in the social network group with knowledge and skills. Field cited a connection between social capital and lifelong learning as he became convinced during his works that this is the type of learning that takes place throughout life (from cradle to grave). It enhances social inclusion, active citizenship, personal development, competitiveness, and employability. To this end, it can be argued that groups of people come together to foster social interaction, to exchange ideas, to share resources together, and to acquire skills and knowledge that will open up opportunities and other benefits for their daily lives. This type of social capital exists in supported housing where the primary role of the frontline worker is to empower vulnerable homeless people to establish social networks as part of the social benefits and opportunity to engage with other people, including service providers, in their community.

This aspect will be looked at in more detail in Section 3.4 in the discussion of social capital from a professional perspective.

### 3.2 The Types of Social Capital

Three main types of social capital can be identified as bonding social capital (e.g. among family members or ethnic groups); bridging social capital (e.g. across ethnic groups); and linking social capital (e.g. between different social classes). Each different type is relevant to different economic, developmental and social outcomes. For example, bonding social capital is important to health in early childhood and frail old age (Berkman & Glass, 2000), whilst bridging social capital is important to a young adult looking for employment opportunities. Therefore, a review of the types of social capital is crucial to this research, as homeless people cannot stay in a group that can no longer benefit them; they need to move to the next level of social capital, with its potential benefits.

**Bonding social capital:** This is about strong, intense personal relationships, offering mutual support, understanding and exchange. Bonding social capital denotes strong ties between people of similar circumstances or conditions, such as immediate family, friends and neighbours (Power & Willmot, 2007). Power and Willmot explored three ways in which bonding social capital can take place in their research work on ‘social capital within the neighbourhood’:

- People to count on – In this case, the majority of respondents expressed being able to be themselves with key trusted people around them; they also stated that they felt appreciated by others and that they had people (such as family, friends and neighbours) closer to them to talk to when upset. It should be noted that few respondents cited professionals such as Sure Start employees, health visitors and doctors to provide support as required.

- Family links – The majority of respondents stated that they have family contacts to turn to for help and this is commonly around child care, either one-off or ongoing arrangements.
- Friends – This is the aspect where 60 per cent of the respondents said that they had at least weekly contact with their friends living in the same area or support and practical support and emotional well-being. The dominant theme for this aspect, as for all aspects of bonding, is the recognition that the respondents are receiving support from their friends.

**Bridging social capital:** From the work of Woolcock (2001, esp. pp. 13–14), bridging social capital can be viewed as a broader membership of groups with more cross-cutting ties, such with business associates, acquaintances, friends from different ethnic groups, and so on; it is good for ‘getting ahead’ in life. It is the connection of people to wider services and structures where engagements are embedded with trust, norms and obligations.

**Linking social capital:** The work of Power and Wilmot (2007) will be used to discuss the linking social capital type. This is the connection of people through a network of support to the agencies or professionals classified as those in positions of power. It is good for accessing support from formal institutions. It is different from bonding and bridging social capital in the sense that it is concerned with relations between people who are not on an equal footing. While bonding and bridging social capital are ‘horizontal’, linking is ‘vertical’. An example of this type of social capital is the relationships between the staff of supported housing and vulnerable homeless people. They can only be connected to care coordinators attached to social services or community mental health workers, benefit agency workers, the Local Authority housing department, JSA, local education sector, and local training organisation through their supported housing officer (otherwise known as their key worker).



This linking form of social capital is useful to this project in terms of categorising the type of social capital that can assist vulnerable homeless people to enhance their socio-economic well-being or find a fulfilled lifestyle. The role of supported housing is to connect vulnerable people to wider society, where they can receive the services and potential skills that they need to live in independent living accommodation.

### **3.3 The Notion of Trust in Social Capital**

The work of Fu (2004) on trust, social capital and organisational effectiveness was reviewed to examine the notion of trust in social capital, Fu brought the topic to the attention of notable writers, as stated below, to synthesise the relationship between both concepts and their benefit to an individual, groups and community as a whole. Renowned authors of sociology such as Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman and Robert Putnam, and Field in recent years, produced a series of works on social capital that revolved around a complex account of people's relationships and their values. The study of social capital has therefore forged a link between social interest and economic development. Fukuyama's work (1995) on economic prosperity demonstrated how the notion of trust, mutual relationship and cooperation in the form of joint working can create economic prosperity and the work of Fukuyama (1995), *The Social Virtue and Creation of Prosperity*, reinforced how the culture of trust and spontaneous sociability can lead to the growth of enterprises beyond family to a professionally managed organisation. Again, Fukuyama in a brief statement made the reader understand the class of trust between high-trust societies and low-trust societies. This review will not critique the names of countries listed as high- and low-trust societies, but will readily concede that high-trust societies produce natural economic growth as a result of operating to common objectives and strong networking. This brief was written to look at how Fukuyama's work on social capital raised awareness of how social interest groups could exist and work in the same objectives in a clearly

defined structure of interaction. Trust plays a significant role in how a society or social group achieves its objectives, which is another reason why Field (2003) stated that the social interest groups are expected to work cooperatively in achieving their goals. It can be conceded that social capital is of key importance in the social capital literature.

Furthermore, Fu (2004) shed light on the dynamism of a relationship developed by trust and, as such, questioned the coherence of the concept of trust. He embraced the work of scholars such as Coleman (1988), Putnam (1993), Fukuyama (1995), Woolcock (1998), and Field (2003) in his thesis to establish the strong link between social capital and trust. The relationship between trust and social capital is partly due to their similar origins or sources. Fu made a case for the economic benefit of social capital through the notion of trust and in a situation where people work together under a mutual agreement. Fu used the ideas of Fukuyama to define social capital as the ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups and organisations (Fukuyama, 1995: 10). Again, this is very common in the context of supported housing, where vulnerable people engage with the housing-related support service provision by virtue of the trusted working relationship between them and their main support workers. The notion of trust between vulnerable people and their support workers is developed over a period of time. It is therefore not an understatement to say that nothing happens if you do not trust people. Without trust, people or social groups cannot work together to achieve a common goal or objective that will lead to a positive outcome.

Fu made an analytical distinction between social capital and trust by assessing the efficiency of organisations rather than individuals, as in the case of the work of Baker (2000) on building organisational competence; nations, in the case of Putnam (1993); or culture or regions, as in the work of Fukuyama (1995). It can be argued through Fu's work

that analysts at times perceived 'organisations as machines producing goods, services or knowledge or as companies that manage resources and coordinate individuals to accomplish a task'. It was said further of Fu's research work on public administration that many organisations with a high level of social capital have survived for a long time without paying much attention to what social capital means, and do not have time to discuss the benefit of networks and communities to their work. The work of Cohen and Prusak (2001) maintained that social capital acted as the company stocks of human connections such as trust, personal networks and community interaction for a thriving organisation. Cohen and Prusak's paper on 'good work in the public' clearly embraced how social capital through trust is significant to business life, and that there can never be productive work without it.

However, Gambetta (1988) confirmed how scholars tend to position trust or refer to it as a great lubricant of networks. In this case, it can be seen that people do things together through trust; it has already been stated that nothing will happen without a trusted relationship. Fu (2004) emphasised that any discussion of trust should be contextualised to have meaning and relevance in a social relationship. He therefore clarified that the trust within the context of family differs from the trust we experience within civil society. It may be argued that the notion of trust plays a significant role in social capital. Trust therefore produces a satisfying relationship for the social support for people in the network group. Fu stated that 'people hold onto each other for long through the understanding and knowledge that they will always be there for themselves whether it rains or dries'. This is therefore the type of friendship where people open up to each other with confidence and with expectations of receiving support that will be helpful to their well-being in return. To back this impression up, it may be recalled that Coleman (1988) conceded that a system of mutual trust is an important form of social capital on which future obligations and

expectations may be based. In this case, Coleman demonstrated through his work how people can gain a powerful position from employment connection and argues further that social capital enables people to access information quickly and precludes the person from spending unnecessary time looking for information (1988). As previously discussed, the followers of Putnam will always embrace his general contributions on social capital in relation to how social interaction and obligations can sustain economic dynamism and governmental performance (Putnam, 1993). This is why Putnam referred to the benefits of bridging social capital for the societies and government, which are all for the development of the individual and community in a diverse context.

The review of Fu's work can be used to conclude that the notion of trust is significant in building a tangible relationship in social networks, which echoed the work of Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) in which they perceived trust as a key 'gemstone' or development that occurs naturally in the relational dimension of social capital. Analysing the work of Nahapiet and Ghoshal, as originated through the review of Fu's work, it can be argued that the product of social capital is the closeness of people in the network group. Fu cited the work of Adler and Kwon (2000) to suggest that the perceptions of the relationship between trust and social capital are partially the result of the close relationship between the sources of trust and the sources of social capital. In this case, it is important to consider the distinction between generalised and balanced (one-to-one) trust. The latter is where A trusts B, because B trusts A. Generalised and balanced trust is where we trust everyone in our defined community, regardless of whether they trust us. Mutuality and reciprocity are central to this and to a real of what the community should be.

### **3.4 The Social Capital and Policy**

The previous Labour Government placed emphasis on improving the quality of life for marginalised groups in the community through various initiatives on community engagements facilitated by Community for Local Government. The stock of social capital from the social policy perspective is important to the social business and supported housing sector that cater for the needs of marginalised group, including homeless people. The stock of social capital in supported housing, as indicated above, may be measured by the value of the assets of community groups, which includes money received from government grants and contracts as well as voluntary donations, and also the size and density of their memberships and networks. In actual sense, stocks are primarily valuable as long as their end products provide benefits to sets of workless people, including marginalised homeless people. The CONSCISE project also used this proxy indicator of social capital in terms of the number of voluntary organisations per head of the population, and certainly not in terms of financial assets, which merely expresses the level of political support. However, this is the case for even a basic indicator such as the density of voluntary organisations, as many of these exist not because of need but because of political patronage (CONSCISE Project Report, 2003).

Politicians are in favour of the trend to see a relationship between the recipients of welfare benefits and society. The structure of the relationship requires some form of work (paid or unpaid) from the beneficiary (welfare recipients). The workless initiative introduced by Gordon Brown's Government preferred the term 'reciprocal obligation' to 'mutual obligation' and was put in motion to place more responsibility on welfare recipients to shift away from welfare dependency to an active membership of the society. The Government made efforts to integrate marginalised people (including homeless people in supported housing) into the mainstream community through various initiatives, such as

regeneration programmes, community cohesion and active citizenship programmes. According to a New Commitment Neighbourhood Renewal (National Strategy Action (Social Exclusion Unit, 2001), all government initiatives on community regeneration and renewal programmes entail access of the marginalised to employment, education, health support, and social and housing service provision. However, it should be noted that networking and learning skills for the recipients and providers are the ambivalent factors required to amplify the above community-based service provision and is a further reason why this research project looks into ‘increasing social capital for homeless people in supported housing’. The emphasis on learning arrangements that exists in this project and its connection to social capital shall be discussed later.

The funding arrangement from government through the Local Administrative Authority, known as the Supporting People Funding Regime, places responsibility on providers of housing support services to connect vulnerable homeless people to their local community through an outcome star model on ten main categories: health, social network, life skills, employment and training, self-care, trust and hope, identity and self-esteem, relationships, behaviour, and responsibilities. The aim of Supporting People is to turn people’s lives around, allowing them to live independently and to contribute to society more widely. It is part of the Government’s overall programme to tackle disadvantage and support the most vulnerable people in society (see CLG website for details – <http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/supportandadaptations/supportingpeople/>).

### ***3.4.1 The Big Society***

The aim of this chapter is to examine the impact of the new policy on society in the context of social capital. The ‘Big Society’ is the flagship policy of the 2010 Conservative Party general election manifesto, which now forms part of the legislative programme of the Conservative-Liberal Democratic Agreement.

The Prime Minister re-launched this policy on 19 July 2010 at Liverpool Hope University and thereby declared what this new Government policy aims to achieve in terms of shifting more power into people's hands. The Government set its agenda on providing the citizens, communities, and local government with the information they need to come together, solve their problems and to build the Britain they want.

The Government wants society — the families, networks and neighbours that form the fabric of our everyday lives — to be bigger and stronger than before. It clarified that only when people and communities are given more power and responsibilities can they achieve fairness and opportunity. The Prime Minister, David Cameron, thus seized the opportunity at his public address at Liverpool to urge society to work together for its socio-economic advantage, saying that:

Building this Big Society isn't just the responsibility of just one or two departments. It is the responsibility of every department of Government, and the responsibility of every citizen too. Government on its own cannot fix every problem. We are all in this together. We need to draw on the skills and expertise of people across the country as we respond to the social, political and economic challenges Britain faces. (Cameron, 19 July 2010)

It is clear that the Big Society is another form of government initiative to bring people together into network groups to take responsibility for the development of our society. But this is the beginning of a new socio-economic policy context in which the Government believes it will contribute to better neighbourhoods, in terms of creating a good and inhabitable environment for people, without shifting power to communities to take over public services. Plenty of assurances have been made as to the benefits of the Big Society — to develop skills, to reshape our neighbourhoods, to give citizens ownership of their public services, and to promote active citizenship. In terms of social capital, it is difficult to

say at the early stage of this policy whether it will make a contribution to social capital in terms of bridging and linking social capital for homeless people.

### **3.5 Social Capital from Professional or Supported Housing Perspective**

This chapter linked the relationship between social capital and homeless people through the support services they receive from support workers. The operational definition of social capital from the perspective of support services can be viewed in the context of the improvement to social and health conditions of the people through the help and sympathy of other people. The improvement to social and health conditions of the vulnerable people in supported housing can, as such, be captured in the main discussion below and throughout the research questions, analysis of the enquiries and in the project conclusions.

The work of Berkman and Syme (1979) on social relationship and health is being substantially utilised in this section to provoke thoughtful discussion on social support and its pertinent link to social capital in care and support sectors. Before going into the discussion, it is necessary to remind the reader about the definition of social capital through the work of Hanifan, as it relates to support for the persons in groups or in the community. Hanifan described social capital as the following:

I do not refer to real estate, or to personal property or to cold cash, but rather to that in life which tends to make these tangible substances count for most in the daily lives of people, namely, goodwill, fellowship, mutual sympathy and social intercourse among a group of individuals and families who make up a social unit.... If he may come into contact with his neighbour, and they with other neighbours, there will be an accumulation of social capital, which may immediately satisfy his social needs and which may bear a social potentiality sufficient to the substantial improvement of living conditions in the whole community. The community as a whole will benefit by the cooperation of all its parts, while the individual will find



in his associations the advantages of the help, the sympathy, and the fellowship of his neighbours. (Hanifan, 1916: 130–131)

Berkman conceptualised social interaction in the care environment and stated that as ‘social networks are embedded in a macro-social environment in which large-scale social forces may influence network structure, which in turn influences a cascading causal process’. This simply refers to the benefits of social network groups together with their structure and formation. However, Berkman expressed his concern about how the macro-social context in networks is established and sustained, and is almost completely absent. For this reason, he argued for consideration to be given to the studies of the social network, given its influences on health.

Berkman and Syme (1979), in their work on social networks, host resistance and mortality clarified the benefit of social networks to vulnerable people and the need to promote social networks in at least five primary pathways: (1) from provision of social support (2) social influence (3) social engagement (4) person-to-person contact, and (5) access to resources and material goods. They identified these five steps as psycho-social and behavioural processes that may influence close pathways to health status, including direct physiological stress responses, psychological states and traits, health-damaging or health-promoting behaviours such as smoking tobacco (Fu, 2004) or physical activity, and exposure to infectious disease agents.

Berkman and Syme relate to the structure of network ties and its pertinent influences on health through the provision of social support. They also argue that not all ties are supportive, as unhealthy habits cannot be useful to any parties involved. They categorised social support into subtypes that include emotional, instrumental, appraisal, and informational support.

Berkman (1995) declared that social support is how social relationships provide a basis for intimacy and attachment, as discussed previously in the work of Hanifan (1916), in terms of the benefit of the social interaction of the people in the groups. Berkman thus stated that intimacy and attachment are not limited to relationships that are traditionally thought of as being intimate between partners, parents and children (to include more extended ties). It should be noted that Berkman referred to the type of relationships that are solid at a community level. However, they maintained that individuals feel strong bonds and attachments to places (e.g. a neighbourhood) and organisations (e.g. voluntary and religious organisations).

Shared norms about health behaviours (e.g. alcohol and cigarette consumption, treatment adherence) might be powerful sources of social influence with direct consequences for the behaviours of network members.

Berkman identified the third pathway as being more difficult to define; a pathway by which networks may influence health status is by promoting social participation and social engagement. Berkman therefore described the function of networks as a way of getting together with friends, attending social functions, group recreation and church attendance, which are all instances of social engagement. Relatively, the studies of social capital suggest that social engagement is critical in maintaining cognitive ability (Bassuk et al., 1999) and reducing mortality (Glass et al., 2000). Wilkinson also made a contribution to the connection between social relationships and well-being through his seminar notes (sponsored by ESRC and presented on 4 July 2002) on the impact of social capital. He stated that the common causes of negative well-being are associated with damaging levels of chronic anxiety associated with depression, fear, insecurity, a lack of a sense of control, shame, embarrassment, feelings of inferiority, hopelessness, social isolation, hostility,

negative social relations, and so on (see <http://www.haworthjt.com/Wellbeing-esrc/seminar4-notes.html#capital>).

Berkman at length identified another pathway, where networks can influence disease. Yet another is by restricting or promoting exposure to infectious disease agents through person-to-person contact. In this instance, Berkman suggested that the agents responsible for the health promotion could easily become the vectors responsible for spreading the infectious disease to the people they are in contact with. It has now become a widespread phenomenon that the means of integrating vulnerable homeless people back into the main core of society is through social capital. For this reason, organisations such as Thames Reach, Look Ahead, St Mungo's, Supported Housing Ltd, and a host of others have taken the management of supported housing and care to a different dimension. Thus, they have made employment and training part of the core elements of their service provision. But there are other many housing support service providers that have recently made a strong connection between support services and social capital through the implementation of an 'outcome star', enforced by the funder, Supporting People. However, it should be noted that the concept of social capital is referred to in the supported housing sector as social networks or in recent times as social inclusion.

Thames Reach began their social capital project by proposing a research project with Lemos and Durkacz on how to connect vulnerable people with their families, old friends and to the wider community through the Dream Deferred project. As is the practice to this day in supported housing, residents (otherwise known as service users or customers) only turn for support to their support workers and other professionals (such as community practice nurses, psychiatrists, GPs, social workers, family mediators, and other specialist workers from social enterprises). They rarely, if ever, call for the attention of other people

outside professional support agencies or engage with the support services on offer. The Dream Deferred project conducted by Lemos and Durkacz (2002) confirmed how some residents of supported housing restricted their support networks to professionals and, therefore, became detached from other people. This restriction limited their connection to social engagement and the opportunity for broader well-being activities. The Dream Deferred project outcome thus stated: ‘People have frequent contact with professionals.... Hostel and housing staff, key workers and health workers are significant sources of help and support. However, some dissatisfaction was expressed with these relationships’.

- The findings from the research, from both the perspective of service users and support workers, stated that ‘supporting people in building and rebuilding their relationships with friends and family is not a core activity offered as part of housing-related support’. The main reasons for this are that: (1) the roles of staff in supported housing agencies may be too focused on practical matters such as benefits or rent, and less on the emotional concerns of their service users, and (2) supporting people in building social networks does not feature on support plans (where they exist). As a result, any work done with service users regarding family and friends is likely to be unstructured and often unrecorded.
- Support workers may not have the counselling and other interpersonal skills required to explore more deeply. So if a service user needs that kind of support, they will either have to find it from another agency or be referred to another service provider by their support worker if they know of one.
- Person-centred services offering the kind of emotional support that people need to build and rebuild their social networks are patchy and there is duplication in some areas. There are wide variations between the services provided by supported housing agencies and there is not enough awareness of the services they do not provide. Whether or not a service user is offered intensive emotional support can often be down to chance. Referral may depend on factors such as staff awareness of the need for support and whether local intensive support services known to staff have the capacity to meet the identified needs.

In short, the Dream Deferred project conceded that housing support staff cannot cover all areas of the needs of the homeless in relation to social network building and thus highlighted various ways of linking them to families and friends through social and family mediation centres. The project recommended improving the well-being of vulnerable people through social activities, employment and training engagements. To this end, the project report designed the toolkit to assist support workers in helping people build social networks into their day-to-day practice — alongside advice on welfare benefits, helping people to find training or employment, resettlement and the other activities that take place as part of housing-related support.

The Dream Deferred project is connected to this project because the physical manifestation of the outcome of this work led to a similar design of the outcome measurement toolkit and traffic light. These tools were put in place to assist both support workers and a tenant of the Moonday project to develop a person-centred support plan around health improvement, work, trust, social networks, and living skills.

### **3.6 Education and Employment Training and the Development of Social Capital**

This chapter establishes how social capital can be maximised through education and training for homeless people.

The Plowden Report (1967) identified education priority areas, and the Urban Programme (1968) looked at the community as a whole, examining the need for jobs and schools, and so on.

When Labour returned to office in 1997, the Party returned to its concern for the inner city. The Labour Government stated in the foreword to the original Green Paper.

‘The Learning Age: a Renaissance for a New Britain’, ‘learning enables people to play a full part in their community and strengthens the family, the neighbourhood and consequently the nation’ (DfEE, 1998, 1).

Thus, the contribution to society of entering or re-entering learning may include various forms of civic engagement, such as volunteering, networking and reversing the perceived notion of a society made up of increasingly isolated and socially excluded individuals. In many ways, this is the foundation of the then-Labour’s ‘Third Way’ politics, creating a participatory space between government and society which promotes greater social responsibility, civic renewal and ‘helps communities help themselves’ (DfEE, 1999, 55).

The Government conceded that education and training are central to communities turning themselves around, for example, The Scottish Executive’s (1999) ‘Communities: Change through Learning’ highlighted that community education is a key contributor to lifelong learning and represents a good initiative that can be implemented to combat social exclusion. Through its commitment to learning as an agent for change, it supports the Scottish people to improve personal, community, social, and economic well-being. In a nutshell, community education is a way of working than a sector of education. Its unique contribution is to create learning opportunities within and for communities.

CeVe (1990) emphasised the reason why Government believes that education may help communities to develop is that it believes that the capacity of individuals and groups of all ages to participate in developing their own learning is crucial to improving quality of life. Through learning, people can come to make a real contribution to their own communities and participate in local and national democratic processes. Through learning, people can build the confidence and capacity to tackle wide social and economic issues,

such as health or community safety. Skills can be acquired at many levels that are applicable to any walk of life. Sometimes of these are essential skills, such as literacy or basic life management, that those who have benefitted fully from formal education systems take for granted. Without them, social exclusion is much more likely. With them, people can increase their opportunities for moving into further and higher education and into employment. Through them, local people can develop productive partnerships with other agencies relating to a wide range of social, economic and health as well as educational needs.

Field (2003) synthesised the work of James Coleman, researcher into school attainment, to clarify how social capital through a strong social networks can support the cognitive and social development of young people. In this account Field went on to explain that in addition to promoting the cognitive and social development of young people, social capital may at least partly compensate for other environmental influences such as ethnicity and socio-economic deprivation. He also apportioned the benefit of social capital to adult learning in terms of cognitive and social development. To this end, Field concluded that the better the stock of social capital in a region or a community, the greater the capacity for mutual learning and improvements in the quality of human capital.

### **3.7 The Benefits and Limitations in Drawing from a Range of Theoretical Positions**

The review of literature assisted this project to describe the current status of knowledge from the various works of notable scholars, and the gathering of knowledge from a wide range of theoretical positions provided justification to the research findings.

Drawing from the wide range of theoretical positions served to shape enquiries that provoked discussion on the social-economic disadvantages faced by homeless people and also the choice of research methodology, through the review of epistemologies and methods applied by the practitioners. Learning from the epistemologies and research methods through the work of the previous research practitioners was covered at the earliest part of this programme and the review helped identify the type of knowledge applicable to this project in terms of professionals, hence the reason for a discussion on vertical knowledge and horizontal knowledge that emerged in the early part of this project report.

Although theories on social capital and homelessness provide a solid background to this study in terms of using the information from various writers to validate the findings from this research enquiry, more attention was paid to the problems participants identified as being chiefly behind their exclusion from community-based services. The problems associated with their homelessness and of their exclusion were perceived in this project as the circumstantial evidence. The recommendations in this project were based on evidence of the findings, as opposed to the theoretical perspective of social capital. In other words, the recommendations made in this project were based on what will lead to the real-life changes for the participants (homeless people and not to reinforcing a social-economic agenda for change on a wide range of theories. Of course, the theories became helpful in terms of best-practice guidelines and presentation of recommendations to the senior management team.



## **Chapter 4      Methodology**

Methodology help the coherent collection of theories, knowledge, practice, and information needed to justify this project's validity. Therefore, this chapter considers and justifies the selection of methods employed in this research project. The knowledge, gathering of theoretical applications, research approach, and method will be synthesised as follows:

### **4.1 Epistemology**

As part of the project preparation, I examined epistemologies used by research practitioners in order to identify and apply appropriate knowledge. This was drawn from theoretical understanding and experience from both frontline and strategic functions in supported housing. In effect, I can now throw a light on the meaning of epistemology. Known as the theory of knowledge, it is the branch of philosophy that studies the nature, methods, limitations, and validity of knowledge and belief.

Epistemology in this context relates to the notion of using knowledge gathered from investigation to justify the need to review and determine the level of current social capital in supported housing. It outlines how knowledge is constituted and formed in terms of this subject matter, first and foremost, that knowledge is socially constructed through people interacting in networks. They share knowledge, trust the knowledge that the other has, and give it to others. To this end, constructiveness contributes to the planning of the project according to the detailed discussion presented in the following pages. In short, 'a person knows what they know because they trust what others know in their networks – that's social capital'. Thus, this project is concerned with truth, belief and justification through the involvement of vulnerable homeless people and workers from Supported Housing Ltd. The primary questions addressed are:

- What is currently the predominant knowledge and understanding of social capital in supported housing?
- How might knowledge be developed by practitioners in helping homeless people to create new contacts through health, employment and social engagement in the community?

#### ***4.1.1 Acquiring Data***

The aim of this chapter is to set the parameters upon which data will be acquired for the project through literature and collaborative enquiries with people by various means, such as interviews, surveys, desktop exercises, and participatory forums. The knowledge acquired for this project emerged from:

- Residents of Supported Housing Ltd;
- Staff from Supported Housing Ltd;
- Direct experience of working in supported housing with an insight into current social capital practice; and
- The Chief Executive of Thames Reach.

A general knowledge of social capital in supported housing had been acquired during previous research. This will be evaluated and synthesised to support an argument for increasing social capital in supported housing through work-based learning and its contribution to community renewal.

**Constructivism:** Constructivism is a view in philosophy positing that all knowledge is ‘constructed’, inasmuch as it is contingent on convention, human perception and social experience. Constructivism proposes new definitions for knowledge and truth, forming a new paradigm based on inter-subjectivity instead of the classical objectivity and viability of truth.

As stated above, knowledge is concerned with social experience. Since this project has a strong link with social interaction between people, this project will therefore examine the location of information and professional knowledge required to support vulnerable people to overcome problems of social and economic exclusion, as well as their transformation to a fulfilled lifestyle, through an active engagement with socio-economic activities. Knowledge required to transform the lives of vulnerable young homeless people can be located from two directions. The primary source of knowledge is the practitioners or professionals working together as a network of support agencies to maximise the provision of support services to vulnerable people on health, employment and the social skills required to reach their high potential and a fulfilled lifestyle. The professionals share knowledge of the circumstances of the vulnerable homeless person with each other, as well as an aggregate, to inform the work they will need to put together in supporting the well-being of the person concerned. It should also be noted that vulnerable young homeless people themselves acquired knowledge from social interaction with their new contacts as part of their support network journey. The knowledge they have about their position in the world and the different strategies to affect it comprises primary knowledge. Professionals, practitioners, researchers, and academics build secondary knowledge by examining that primary knowledge.

Bernstein (2002, Chapter 9) explained the use of knowledge in our individual everyday lives as well as the types of knowledge that we share with others in groups or in the community. He identified two types of knowledge:

**Horizontal knowledge:** the type of knowledge that we develop in our everyday lives, useful for finding one's way around, knowing who to ask or how to solve typical problems. It is essentially a fundamental human resource without which institutions and societies

would be impossible. Alfred Schutz, the existential phenomenologist, refers to the knowledge we develop for our everyday lives as ‘recipe knowledge’ (Schutz, 1964: 120–134).

Schutz demonstrates that knowledge is derived from people’s practical experience of the world. He does this by constructing the ideal types of ‘the man on the street’, ‘the citizen who aims at being well informed’ and ‘the expert’. Knowledge is socially distributed according to these types, by what each takes for granted, and according to what system of relevance is utilised. Thus, the ‘man on the street’ operates according to his (or her) set of naive relevance, for which ‘recipe knowledge’ is adequate.

According to Bernstein, horizontal knowledge is specific to particular contexts and workplaces. It is fluid and adaptable to new situations, but bounded by the specific contexts within which it arises. It is the type of knowledge that gives information about a new workplace, rather than the acquisition of knowledge about why workplaces are organised in a particular way or, at least potentially, how they might be organised differently.

**Vertical knowledge:** This is conceptual, abstract and developed to understand rather than directly to transform or act on the world (natural and social). It is not directly related to our knowledge derived from everyday experiences. Vertical knowledge is neither flexible nor easily adaptable; it is difficult to change because, unlike horizontal knowledge, it is shared by specific communities. The concepts of vertical knowledge are related systematically to each other and to the values and practices of specialist communities (e.g. scientists) (Bernstein, 1995).

Generally, the distinction between both vertical and horizontal knowledge is an epistemological distinction, not solely a status distinction. In pre-industrial societies, the

distinction between vertical and horizontal knowledge was largely a reflection of the distribution of power: the main form of vertical knowledge was theology. However, in industrial societies, the distribution of power is still involved in knowledge hierarchies, although vertical knowledge offers explanatory and, in some cases (especially in the natural sciences), predictive power. The study of knowledge in relation to vertical and horizontal dimensions could be useful to practitioner researchers aiming to use data information on knowledge to resolve their enquiry.

Berstein's principle of knowledge is not only useful for the concept of organisation, as the application of both types of knowledge mentioned above could be significant to network groups sharing knowledge from either vertical or horizontal views to resolve problems or to guide the implementation of a particular action with sound understanding, values and obligations.

## **4.2 The Research Methodology: Approach and Data Collection**

### **Technique**

Applied research methodology and methods appropriate to this project were selected to show a deep understanding of what this research work is all about, through proper planning and structural design of the project.

#### ***Action research and collaborative group***

I adopted action research methodology for this project as the outcome of the work originated in collaborative enquiries with the practitioners and residents of Supported Housing. Action research is an iterative inquiry process that balances problem-solving actions implemented in collaborative analysis, or research to understand underlying causes, enabling future predictions about personal and organisational change (Reason & Bradbury, 2001).

For this research work, the above collaborative work comprised participatory sessions with professionals/practitioners and obtaining direct information from the residents. This was to substantiate that action research is a reflective process of progressive problem solving, led by individuals working with others as part of a 'community of practice' to improve the way they address issues and solve problems. By facilitating the group work, I will show that action research can be undertaken by larger organisations or institutions when assisted or guided by professional researchers, with the aim of improving their strategies and practices as well as the knowledge of the environments within which they practise (Lewin, 1946).

A set-up was arranged to gather a range of information from people through social groups. Working with participants in the groups will see the researcher recognised as a member contributing their knowledge to find solutions for improvement. Park adopts the term 'action-orientated research' to refer to 'knowledge generating activities that result in action' (Park, 1999).

Similar to Park's study, this research project applied a participatory action research approach to identify the learning of the practitioners (support workers). In addition it examined how well they were able to utilise their learning development to assist less privileged people or residents from Supported Housing Services to improve their quality of life and to make contributions to the community through their engagement with the support services available.

Action research was selected due to previous experience of its use to explore how wider benefits can be maximised for vulnerable homeless people in Lewisham. In this study, I directed the process and implementation of this collaborative enquiry with other such providers as the Chair of the Supporting People Client Workshop Sector. In other

words, I worked with other practitioners (the workshop group) as a participant to originate the following research categories:

- Self-efficacy, which includes items to do with control of one's life and the management of change;
- Mental health, which includes items on self-esteem and psychological health;
- Community, which includes items on social networks and community involvement;
- Values, which includes items on morality, tolerance and the environment;
- Political involvement, which includes items on voting and political interest; and
- Access to a variety of services such as housing, employment opportunity and education in their neighbourhood and the community as a whole.

The collaborative group/workshop recommended that all providers go back to their individual services and develop plans for how they will support their clients to engage with the socio-economic activities taking place in their neighbourhood. This confirmed Revans' (1983) findings on using action research by emphasising the following: 'it is recognised that a problem is not solved at the end of the formal research. Those involved continue to improve practice, sometimes through action learning sets.'

The action research approach was considered a means of investigating how to go about 'increasing social capital in supported housing and in the process, to establish its contribution to community'. The reason for its application in this project is to enhance a change that will enable marginalised homeless people to connect to an access network of resources and learning that will improve their economic participation and eventual contribution to their neighbourhood as an active citizen.

The research methodology supported the professionals and practitioners collaborating in the research by directing their own change in terms of how they evaluate their workplace learning. This included an accumulation of knowledge and experience with potentially significant impact on the lives of the marginalised people with whom they are working. The research approach helped the professionals/participants to re-evaluate their own knowledge and how their learning experience could make changes to the quality of service, improve their own working life, and have major benefits for community-based services.

During the development of the action research proposal, three possible means of enquiry designs were considered.

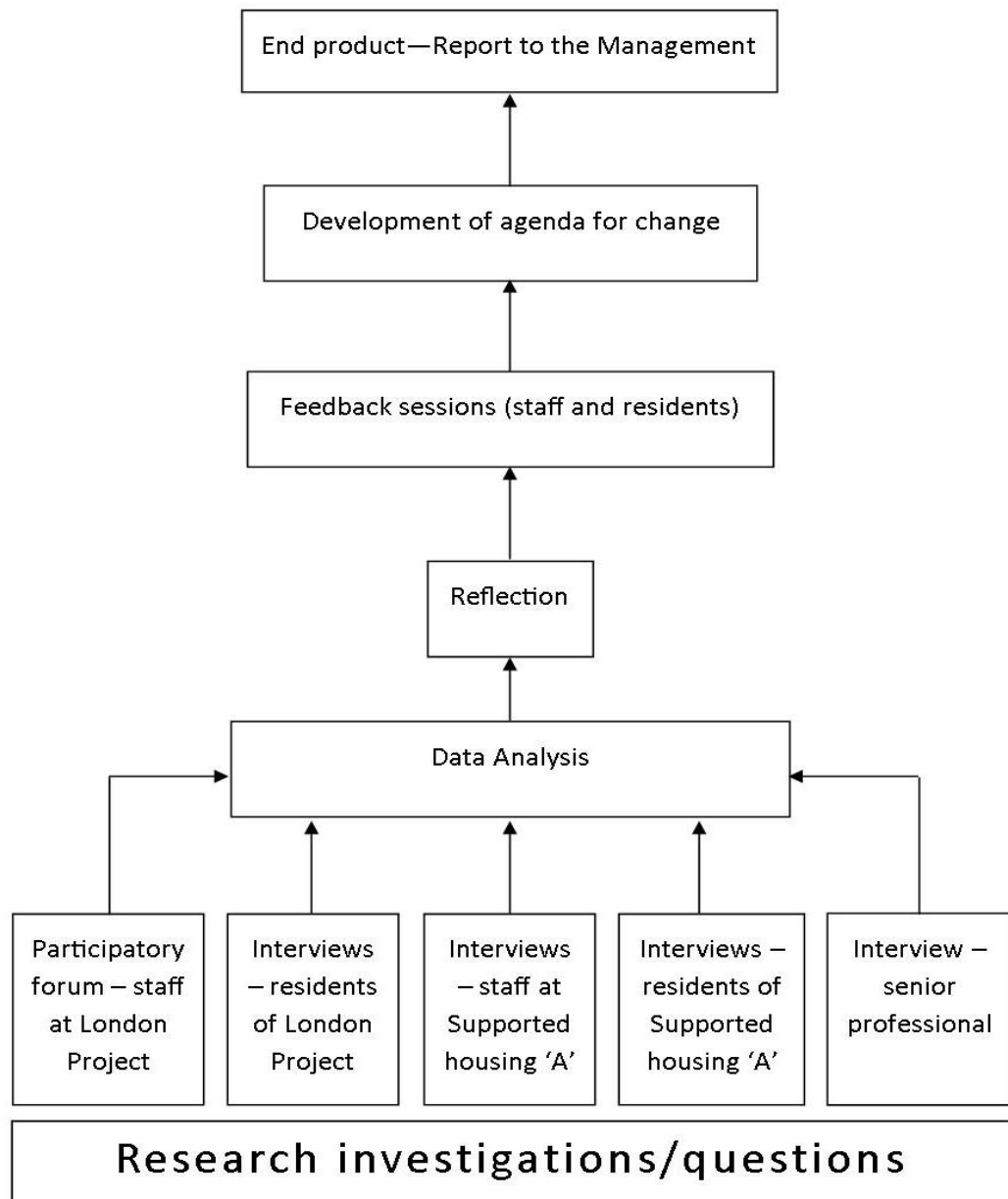
***Using collaborative group enquiries:***

Here the key issues were:

- To explore how the practitioners have been supporting vulnerable homeless people or residents of supported housing in engaging with networks of support agencies for health, employment, education, and social and leisure activities;
- To determine the usefulness to the residents of new friends and old friends and how such connections and reconnections contribute to their well-being;
- To find out about the learning relationships between support workers and external workers (medical professionals, community mental health teams, probation worker), with each having used best practice and professional knowledge.

Figure 4.1 shows the process of achieving the research enquiry through data collection and techniques, as follows:





**Figure 4.1 Achieving the research enquiry**

**Step one:** The first step was the period set aside for the compilation of investigations/questions that constitute the enquiry framework.

**Step two:** This was the period of collating information from the participants in the following order:

1. Carried out participatory forum with the support staff of the Supported Housing Turnaround Project.
2. Conducted interview session with the group of residents at the Supported Housing Turnaround Project. There was also an arrangement to interview a senior professional — the Chief Executive of Thames Reach, one of the largest London-based homeless organisations, who was involved in the Dream Deferred project with Gerard Lemos and Stefan Durkacz.
3. The research base was shifted to a young people's service known as Moonday project, where the interview sessions with senior staff and frontline staff took place on separate occasions.
4. Interview sessions were carried out with the young homeless people living at the Supported Housing Moonday Project in Rise and Happyside County.

**Step three:** This is the period of working in isolation of residents and staff to put the findings together.

**Step four:** At this stage, I endeavoured to reflect on the investigation framework and the purpose of this research work. I also reflect on all aspects of the enquiry sessions with the residents, staff and the current working practice document. These reflections deemed it necessary to provide feedback and recommendations to participants.

**Step five:** This is the period of analysing the research findings and discussing the project activity.

**Step six:** The period of providing feedback to staff and residents by separate arrangement.

- Feedback sessions to residents will take place at one of the service user's participatory forums, and constituted the first phase of the feedback session.

**Step seven:** The second phase of the feedback involved meeting the two team leaders and the service manager of Supported Housing Ltd for an update on the findings and to agree an action plan, together with a review of working practice and the identification of a learning development programme for the staff.

- The final feedback session also entailed meeting the frontline staff to discuss findings and recommendations for the future.

### **4.3 Research Designs Considered**

- To explore how trust was developed between vulnerable homeless people and their support workers;

The collaborative enquiries were conducted with the staff of Supported Housing Ltd over three sessions. The first two sessions took place in May and June 2008. However, the last session was not completed until December 2008 due to one of the participants being unwell. The questions for the collaborative group were designed in a similar way to those of the interviews. The responses from the group are summarised and discussed in Chapter 6, Research Findings.

The interviews with residents of Supported Housing Ltd were used to:

- Establish how they have personally engaged with networks of support to enhance their independent living skills around an engagement with health, employment and training, education, and social activities;
- How interactions with new contacts and reconnections with old friends have contributed to their well-being; and
- To find evidence of how they have perceived their progression with support services through outcome star measurement.

**Interview with a senior professional:** A further semi-structured interview was conducted with a senior professional from the supported housing sector. This was to investigate their

personal views on how social capital is progressing in supported housing from the perspective of health, employment, education, and social engagement.

The selected action research design was supplemented by repeat interviews with residents and experts or a senior professional from Thames Reach. Characteristics of the broad research design selected included the following specific aspects:

- Reiterative semi-structured interviewing of key personnel;
- Definition of key research questions relating to the three main areas of research; and
- Semi-structured interviewing of experts to provide clarification and critical evaluation of the key elements of research data accessed. This was in addition to providing informed opinions on practice, experiential learning in existence, learning, and suggestions arising thereof.

The interviews conducted with former and current residents and professionals were approximately forty minutes in length. All volunteers responded well to the enquiries, with the exception of one resident who was negative throughout the meeting. The interviews with senior professionals lasted for an hour, apart from that conducted with Jeremy Swain which was of two and a half hours' duration.

Generally, and where possible, interviews were conducted face-to-face and recorded. In one case the interview was conducted with an ex-resident by telephone and details of this interview were also recorded.

The studies of epistemologies used by research practitioners and literature reviews on social capital from academic research, policy agendas, professional practice, and from insightful knowledge of working in supported housing on a strategic level helped to shape

the structure of the interview questions, and were used as prompts and conversation starters.

#### **4.4 Research Questions**

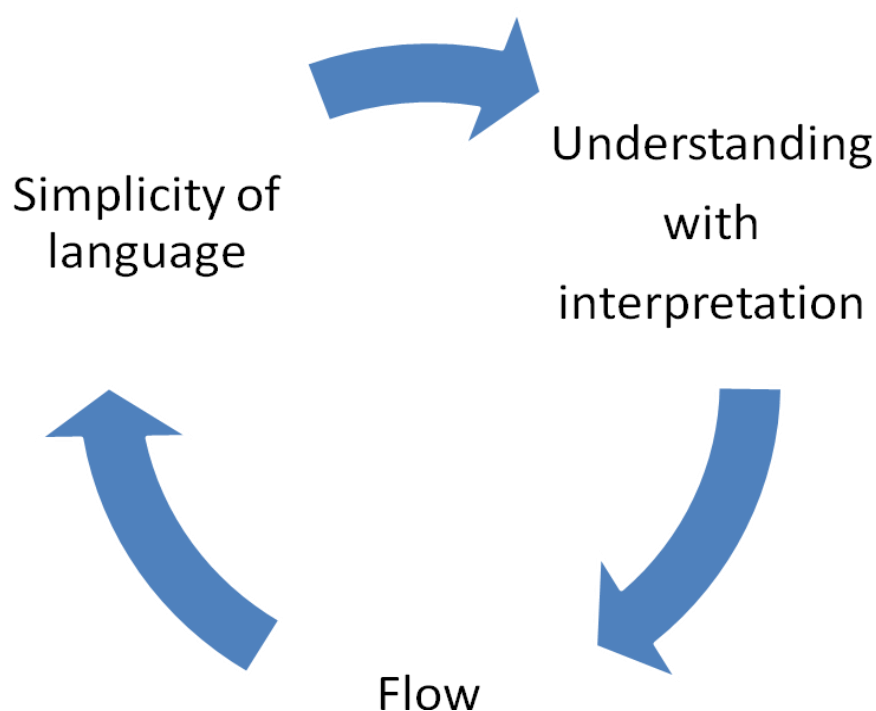
The framework and the structure of this research question were determined following preliminary planning and project consultation with Supported Housing Ltd. The framework for the research questions was designed to obtain information from the participants, such as the staff of Supported Housing Ltd, and to be used in conjunction with the interviews with their residents and the chief executives of Thames Reach Housing.

I ensured that the questions were relevant to the subject and easy to analyse. Designing questions to fit the purpose of the project did not come about as simply as was imagined. Efforts were made to go over the draft questions on more than two occasions. It became very clear that designing a research questionnaire is not about how well someone can write plain English or about whether that someone has a modicum of common sense (Oppenheim, 1992: 1). Oppenheim stated that, although plain English is helpful in every walk of life, it requires more than simplicity of the language. Certainly, simplicity is one of the requirements but, as Bell (2005) put it, a questionnaire requires discipline when it comes to the selection and writing of questions, as well as the design, piloting and distribution, and the monitoring of returns. The questions were formulated to be used as part of the interview process, with this approach being less time-consuming as there was no need for the person conducting the interview to distribute questionnaires and to monitor feedback.

The draft questions were reviewed on more than two occasions to make the investigation fit for purpose, relevant to the hypothesis, and free from ambiguity and jargon. The structure of the questions was considered to allow the engagement of the

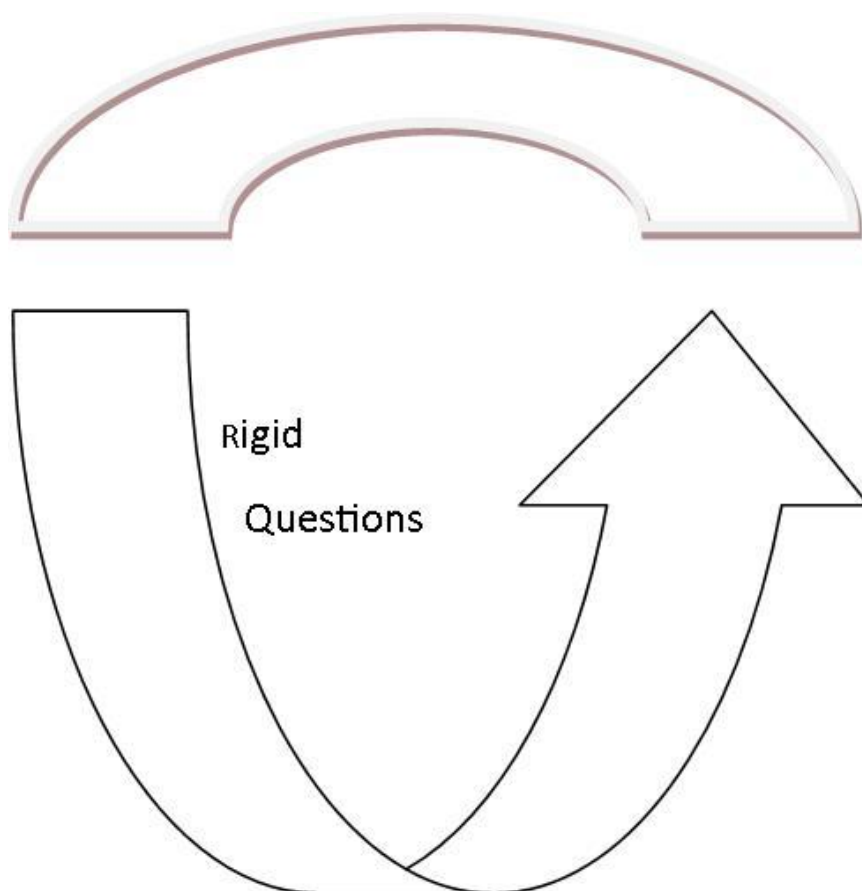
participants. The set of questions for the interview process took a different approach from a questionnaire designed for a survey. The selected questions were well structured with an open and verbal interview approach.

Consideration was given to the background of residents who came from non-English-speaking countries. However, there was no requirement to employ an interpreter within or outside Supported Housing Ltd. It was a good idea to recognise the possibility of a field communication problem in this project, as requirements were made and could have been implemented to promote the active participation of people with restricted English. It should be noted for any form of services and industries that language simplicity and the arrangement of interpretation through internal staff or professional workers promote the accessibility of everybody to the service, regardless of their circumstances.



**Figure 4.2** Open Question Design – devised for the project enquiry

Figures 4.2 and 4.3 were specifically designed for this project to highlight how plain and basic communication encourages participants to respond properly to the research questions or enquiries. In short, Figure 4.2 shows how to engage homeless people with the enquiry through flow, simple language and an understanding of the process and rationale behind the investigation. This enquiry framework recognises that there is a tendency for some homeless people to have learning disabilities or to originate from non-English-speaking countries. For example, provision was made for language translation and other communication facilities such as Braille. The questions were written in plain English.



**Figure 4.3** Closed method of presenting questions

The figures illustrate the relational dynamics between a closed and open type of interview question. Figure 4.2 is an example of a question designed to consider basic and open communication with facilities (such as interpreter and other requirements) to enable individuals to participate in the research enquiry. This type of interview question is called an open question. Figure 4.3 is an example of a complex interview arrangement where the structure of the interview question cannot accommodate the participation of those people who do not understand or speak English. The open interview question was considered for this research enquiry because it provides an opportunity for the interviewees to engage with the interview question with flexibility and support. The open interview question also provides an opportunity for the interviewer to make adjustments to the question and probe the interviewees. This research project applied the example in Figure 4.2 in which the framework of the designed question is open in a semi-structured interview with ‘themes’ to which interviewees respond.

## **4.6 Research Validity and Triangulation**

The validity of the data collated and the findings is proven through action research in which designed enquiries emerge from interviews, collaborative groups and observatory approaches. The validity of the research is backed up with literature reviews on social capital from the perspectives of theorists and a practitioner’s perspective; a review of the research work on social networks conducted in the Dream Deferred project; epistemologies used by research practitioners; and insightful knowledge and experience of working in supported housing.

The responses from the interview and collaborative enquiry, together with the additional information supplied by the key personnel within social housing and support sectors, including the funders, were then considered alongside the results of the literature



review in light of the research aims. This provided insight into the extent to which there is formation of social capital in supported housing and how to take the findings forward to increase social capital for their benefit.

The theoretical and practical orientation of this research is validated from three different data collations. Denzin (1978), in his triangulation classification, described data triangulation as research validation that involves time, space and persons.

In social science research, triangulation indicates that more than two methods are used in a research project, with a view to checking the results from several directions. This is also called 'cross-examination'. According to O'Donoghue and Punch, triangulation is a 'method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data' (O'Donoghue & Punch, 2003: 78).

Denzin (1978) viewed methodological triangulation as a research method that involves using more than one method to gather data. The idea is that one can be more confident with findings if different methods lead to the same result. If an investigator uses only one, the temptation is strong to believe in the findings, and this approach will not adequately validate the findings in some complex cases.

Another approach to validation (the postulate of subjective adequacy) is to show research participants the results and interpretations of the research. If they agree with or can see them as adequate interpretations, they are then 'valid'.

In rounding up, this research project claimed the legitimate validity of the findings through theories, methods and empirical materials. In effect, it gives a resounding and deep capacity to overcome the weakness or intrinsic biases as well as the problems that come from single methods, single-theory schemes and single epistemologies.

## **4.7 How Action Research was Carried Out**

This chapter explained how action research was implemented in the context of this project.

### ***Identifying and clarifying the causes and problems:***

The first step this research considered was to develop a clear structure of fit-for-purpose interview questions.

Participants in this project were selected from support workers and residents (also known as young homeless people) through the Service Manager, who explained the anticipated benefits of this project to them.

The participants responded positively to the invitation, as they were eager to be part of a group that will propose changes.

During the research, staff and young people at the Moonday Supported Housing project were met separately to identify the causes of homelessness. In this type of enquiry, young people were able to reflect on their own situation, thereby using the event that led to their homelessness in response to the question concerning the causes of homelessness.

The young people also reflected on their current situation to outline the type of relationship they had with their family, friends, external agencies and the community. This sparked serious concern about their social exclusion from the employment, social and health services.

The staff also used their historical knowledge of working with young people to clarify the various reasons for young people becoming homeless and their current situation in terms of socio-economic engagement.

The participation of young people and staff in this action research confirmed their membership of a social group. The group came up with the new issues concerning classification of homelessness in the form of LGBT as a result of the family reaction.

Upon identifying the problems surrounding the homelessness of young people at Moonday project through the experience and knowledge of the participants, I reflected on the information gathered. I also took the participatory group to a stage of reflection. The purpose was to enable the participants to refresh their minds with an evaluation of the information. This stage enables young homeless people to discuss changes they would like to see in the service they are receiving and in the community, mainly at social events, during local consultation and in opportunities for economic advantage.

***Agreement of senior management:***

I met with the senior management team to present the data and the outcome of the research carried out with the young people, frontline staff and managers. The senior management team embraced all aspects of the recommendations and took on board the need to integrate young homeless people into the society through their positive engagement with health services in the community. The senior management team also accepted that education and employment are two key solutions to the development of social learning and economic skills for young people.

The management also took on board the need for the actual outcomes of the research to be embedded in the support plan. Generally, the action research employed included young people who participated in the research, enabling them to:

- Be educative through their reflection on their past experience and current knowledge of the circumstances that led to their homelessness as well as how their status had deprived them of an opportunity to access social events and employment.

- See themselves as a social group, as they were able to work together on how to maximise social events in the community.
- Maintain one voice as a social group, thereby making recommendations for the Local Authority to consult them on local initiatives.

Moreover, the action research was carried out in such a way that the participants focused on the problem solving and translation of the findings into changes that impact on health. The young people and their support workers volunteered to test the recommendations for a support plan, measuring tools and participation in unpaid work. For example, I undertook some observation visits to young people working with their support worker to develop their support plan with a person-centred approach using the traffic light and outcome star chart to measure the progress they were making towards their objectives.

The outcome of the research was oriented to identification of key performance indicators for staff.

## **4.8 Data Management**

The information gathered from the participants was transferred into a folder. There was a chapter for the individual information in the folder. The individualised chapter referred to the name given to the participant in the project enquiry and the folder containing participant information was kept in a lockable cabinet – I was the only person with access to the lockable cabinet – located outside the project premises, undisclosed to anyone else.

The data was presented to the participants as general feedback, without referring to a specific person as the originator or source of information. The individual situation or condition was not referred to in the summative feedback to the participants. The individual stories were covered in the project write-up and sensitively anonymised as per the declaration made to them.

### ***Post-research enquiries***

The councillors and MPs were not interviewed at the initial stage of this project due to time constraints faced by the researcher. However, post-research enquiry was scheduled to take place with the councillors, MPs, employment agencies, and the local college, mainly to establish the impact of this project on the lives of young homeless people.

## **Chapter 5      Ethical Compliance**

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on general discussion on research ethics, embracing how I implemented the procedures. This is linked to theoretical views within the context of permissions received from Middlesex University's Institute of Work Based Learning and The Chartered Institute of Housing (see Appendix 7 for details).

The second part embraces how the participants for this collaboration were selected. There was a focus on the identification of vulnerable people in supported housing as well as a distinction between vulnerable young adults and minors in terms of ethical operations. This second part shows how I worked with vulnerable people during both the interview and project report stages through the implementation of the following procedures and professional practices: Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, the ethos of Supported Housing Ltd, CIH Professional Rules and Obligations (Honesty and Dignity), confidentiality and anonymity.

### **5.1 General Discussion on Research Ethics**

This research project maintained Supported Housing Ltd's compliance with regulations on the storing and collation of information on staff and residents. It was mindful of ethical issues with regard to how vulnerable residents were invited to take part in the research interviews. The ethos of Supported Housing Ltd in terms of treating their clients with respect and dignity was followed throughout the enquiries and the project write-up.

The participants were given the choice of the researcher using an audio recorder or written notes as a method of data recording, and were informed that all written data would be securely held and that their names would not be referred to in the write-up. Each would be allocated a number to represent their name in the research findings and reference

details. However, their names would feature in the research document in acknowledgement of their contributions to the success of this work, alongside other people.

Therefore, the residents that took part in this interview were given assurance of their anonymity in a similar way to that advised by Powney and Watts: 'interviewing is always to be accompanied by assurances about anonymity and practical confidentiality' (Powney & Watts, 1987: 182).

The duration of the interviews with individuals was kept to 40 minutes for staff and 35 minutes for residents (young homeless people) and as reasonable and as practicable as possible, to avoid overwhelming anyone. Special regard was given to residents who could not hold conversations for long due to their circumstances. The residents and staff were given the choice of pulling out of the interview process at any time if they perceived it necessary to do so.

As part of the ethical operations, an awareness of time constraints was demonstrated in this project in relation to the amount of time at my disposal. Prioritisation was necessary to carry out the research without interrupting my daily professional commitments, associational life and family engagements, a key factor in carrying out quality work with minimal disturbance to conflicting interests. Drucker admonished researchers about time constraints when leading a research project: 'while there are many advantages of being a practitioner researcher, one of the biggest disadvantages is balancing the research activities alongside a full-time job. Rarely can anyone else be employed to release the researcher from some work commitments' (Drucker, 1994: 26). In Drucker's situation, the impact of his research project on his family became a serious issue. To this end, he highlighted that ethical decisions had to be made as to how much time can be spent on each activity, which will then influence the scope of the research study.

I was given ethical release by the Chartered Institute of Housing to carry out this research in my capacity as an associate member and within its standards and code of conduct:

The Institute requires its members to accept and abide by its Code of Professional Conduct as a condition of membership. The Code sets out in detail the standards of personal and professional conduct required and includes a number of specific rules for self-employed members. The standards concern personal integrity, honesty, self-discipline, diligence and professional competence.  
(<http://www.cih.org/join/code>)

With this ethical release from CIH, I was given the go-ahead to carry out this research on the understanding that all the issues of confidentiality and professional ethics would be followed from the beginning of project activity to the end.

## **5.2 The Implementation of the Research Ethic**

The starting point of this project was the identification of the participants. In essence, the participants in the project are support workers, managers and residents of supported housing.

The organisation ethos, safeguarding adult policy and research ethics, were followed in engaging residents of supported housing with the interview session, as follows:

### **5.2.1 Consultation with the Residents**

I met with the Housing Support Team Leaders from the Supported Housing Moonday Project and Turnaround Project to explain the involvement of the residents in this project. I also clarified the procedure in terms of providing residents with equal access to the consultation and their involvement with the interview.



Consultation eventually took place prior to the project enquiry with the residents and they received a clear message about the project in relation to its overall objectives and its benefit to the services provided and across the supported housing sector. The project staff and their line managers went through the procedures with the residents about their consent, their involvement, the recording of information, confidentiality and the setting of the participatory environment.

### ***5.2.2 Informed Consent***

On the day of the interview, I went through the purpose of the project with the residents, including the duration and how they would be referred to in the findings and the project report. I also assured them of how their confidentiality would be maintained in terms of not identifying their names in the discussion. I also obtained written confirmation of the participants' agreement with the enquiries. They were fully informed of their freedom to withdraw if at any stage they decided that they no longer wished to be involved in the project.

The residents also retained the right to ask for their materials to be removed from the project report. However, it should be noted that none pulled out of the interviews or asked for their materials not to be used.

I used the reiterative approach to confirm the understanding of the participants with regard to the information provided and their consent. In effect, I actively sought the consent of the participants directly, as all of them communicate in English and none required learning difficulties or language translation support. Neither were any of the participants classified as minors, as they were above the age of consent. Should the case have involved engaging with minors, the question of informed consent would then have been much more complicated because they may not have sufficient life experience to

enable them to give genuine informed consent to be involved in the project. In that case, it might have been acceptable to have written consent from someone who can legally act on behalf of the minor.

As previously identified, this project entails seeking information from homeless people who are vulnerable because of their social, psychological and other medical circumstances, and who may require sensitive handling as well as a sympathetic approach. Dealing with the vulnerable may, at times, entail working with people who cannot make a decision on their own. Therefore, from the onset of this research project enquiry, I had to make allowances under the Mental Capacity Act for residents to take part in the research project enquiry, through the support of someone who is legally able to act on their behalf. It should be noted, however, that none in this research project enquiry had mental capacity problems; they were able to make decisions on their own despite their circumstances. Thus, there was no need to obtain their consent through a third party.

One of the interview participants disclosed her ongoing history of mental illness and self-harm, however, and two other participants disclosed their ongoing depression and how they have been receiving support from their friends and other residents through a self-harm workshop group coordinated by the support service team leader. Prior to the interview session with the young homeless people at the Supported Housing Moonday Project, I was informed by the support service team leader that some of the residents have a history of borderline mental illness and that the majority of them self-harm.

I had already been worked with these people every day, talking with them about various difficult subjects. I became fully aware of the need for sensitivity. I successfully carried out this project work during my usual intervention with vulnerable people where relationship building management was well maintained with a sensitive approach. Thus, I

was equipped to deal with mental health issues, learning disabilities and other social behaviours (that can be triggered by drug and alcohol) in a professional manner and within the relevant statutory regulations through my experience of:

- Managing Generic Housing Service (alcohol and drug abuse, mental health and learning disability);
- Managing Mental Health Accommodation-Based and Floating Support Services as Team Manager and Service Manager;
- Former Chair of Borough of Lewisham Supporting People Mental Health Sector; and
- Professional and Turnaround Project Branch Committee Member of the Chartered Institute of Housing, through which I was given a research ethic permission to go ahead with the research work.

In effect, I was trusted by Middlesex University's Institute for Work Based Learning, the Chartered Institute of Housing, and Supported Housing Ltd to work with the highest ethical integrity, honesty and within professional boundaries throughout the period of research activity.

All the participants signed a declaration form to confirm their willingness to take part in the interview as a volunteer.

### **5.2.3 Confidentiality**

Having gained the consent of all participants (both vulnerable homeless people and their support workers), I had to put structures in place to ensure that all the information gathered remained confidential.

For example, all the recordings of interviews with staff were securely held away from the staff office in my private lockable cabinet. All the recorded audio information

was transferred into written data without referring to any names immediately after each interview. The written database did not mention or refer to the participant's name, as explained to the participants prior to the interview.

Generally, confidentiality is vital to my professional practice in terms of my work in supported housing as a member of the Chartered Institute of Housing. Confidentiality could become a highly sensitive issue in terms of dealing with human beings and their safety. Therefore, it was clarified prior to the interview sessions that any disclosure harmful to the participants or other people within their vicinity cannot be treated confidentially. The participants were informed that where information given in a research context suggests a threat of serious harm to the participant or others, I would have no option but to implement a disclosure policy to the management or relevant authorities, including my academic advisor.

The record of interviews and materials of the forum group conducted with the participants will be held until after the project report has been scrutinised and approved by the Middlesex University Examination Panel in case of any need to refer to any questions about the source of the materials.

#### **5.2.4 *Anonymity***

All names of participants (residents and support staff) of supported housing were anonymised. Therefore, no one can be identified as a result of what was written in this project report. Although the organisation did not mind whether I anonymised its details, given the level of the involvement of their residents in this project and the vulnerability, it was vital for me to do so, and the organisation is referred to as 'Supported Housing Ltd' throughout. One of their schemes in London is referred to as the Turnaround Project, with the other scheme being known as the Moonday project.

The principal participants among the residents were identified by numbers such as Participants 1 to 17 for the Moonday project, and Participants 01 to 06 for the Turnaround project. They cannot now be recognised by their families or friends.

#### **5.2.5 Conclusion**

In conclusion, I have clearly shown the implementation of ethical procedures around working with vulnerable homeless people in this project, linking my professional practice with a theoretical view of the ethical concept being applied at the interview stage with the project participants. I also followed the procedures and permission from IWBL and CIH throughout the project report in terms of confidentiality, honesty and the recording of information.

## **Chapter 6      The Project Activity and Enquiries**

The research enquiry was conducted from four sources of information, as stated in this thesis: (1) interviews with the staff of the Moonday project, (2) interview sessions with the young people from the Moonday project, (3) the earliest interview session conducted with the tenant of the Turnaround project, together with the collaborative enquiry with the staff, and (4) the interview slot with the Chief Executive of one of the London-based homeless organisations.

The research question was designed in such a way to measure the existing level of social capital or network of support available to vulnerable people in supported housing.

The question was also designed so the existing social networks can be critically analysed in line with the operational definition stated in Section 4.5 of this research project in terms of ensuring the improvement to living conditions of the vulnerable people from the realms of health, social engagement and economic participation.

An analysis of the findings and a breakdown of the categories of people interviewed follows.

### **6.1 Research Enquiry at the Moonday Project**

The Moonday project is the focus point of this research, whose end product will be designed as a social agenda for change in the areas of employment opportunity, improvement to social amenities and community participation for young people or young adults living in supported housing in Rise and Happyside County. Other young people or vulnerable people will benefit from this research work. The Supported Housing Moonday Project was commissioned in 1995 to provide housing-related support, training and

employment, health and well-being services to young people. Due to refurbishment the project moved temporarily from Rise and Happyside County to Villa in February 2010, where it will operate for 49 weeks before moving back to its original base.

Primarily, the research enquiry began at the Turnaround project between April 2008 and June 2009, but a decision was made to shift the focus to the Moonday project due to a number of incidents that might have delayed the progress of this project work. Therefore, the initial enquiry re-started in February 2010 with a team leader for support service at the Moonday project. Intensive enquiries were carried out in March 2010 with four support workers and a team leader of Floating Support Service attached to the Moonday project. The enquiry was also conducted with 17 young people (otherwise known as the service users or tenants of the Moonday project) through semi-structured interviews.



**Figure 6.1 Implementation of research enquiry and procedure**

Figure 6.1 shows the earliest interview carried out at the Turnaround Project for ex-offenders. As stated at the beginning of this chapter and with more details given in the research and methodology, the information was gathered from:

1. Staff, through a collaborative enquiry (participation forum) made up of three sessions or visits to the project. The collaborative enquiry with the staff embraces

the reasons for homelessness, the social networks of the young people, the economic status of the young people, and how the staff are working with them and external agencies to facilitate support on health, social skills, independent living skills, education, employment, and training.

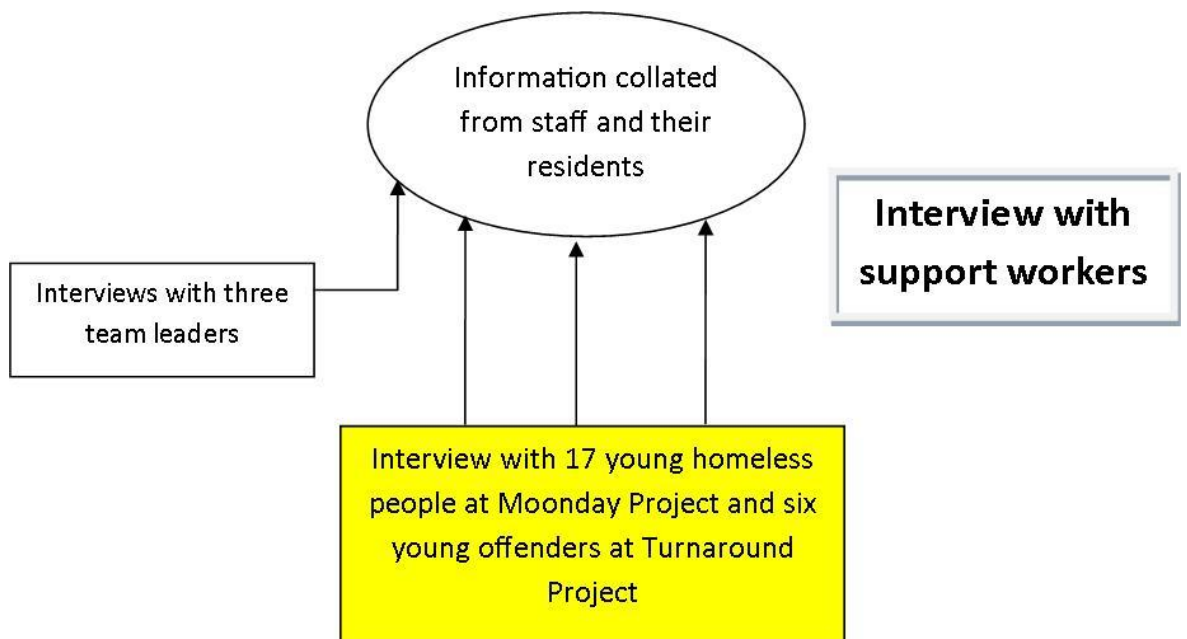
2. Residents, through interviews with current and former tenants of the project. The interviews with the participants were centred on the reasons for their homelessness and their engagement with the available services through their support workers and external agencies. The notion of trust in the support workers and external agencies was also explored. Their engagement with social and economic activities in terms of how they spend their time or days was also investigated as part of the interview processing.

The procedure, as detailed, was followed right through the collaborative enquiry with the staff in terms of the duration of each session not going beyond an hour. The members of staff were given the option of selecting the method of recording information, whether audio recording, hand-written or digitally into a computer. They opted for audio recording and the researcher typing the transcriptions thereafter.

Prior to the collaborative sessions with the staff, a meeting was arranged with them and their service manager, mainly to inform them about the reason for the enquiry and its intended benefit to the service, the organisation, the residents, the supported housing sector, and vulnerable people in general.

The homeless people interviewed, as well as the participatory forum with the staff of the Turnaround Project, were not perceived sufficiently numerous to give this research work credibility. Therefore, the findings gathered from the Turnaround project were used as supplementary information only.





**Figure 6.2 Information collated from the Supported Housing Moonday project**

As shown in Figure 6.2, the enquiry was conducted in line with the research procedures highlighted in Chapter 5 of this research project and the ethical release obtained from the Chartered Institute of Housing. It shows that information was gathered through interviews with:

- Team leaders of the project. The enquiry was structured or designed to explore the overview of homelessness in young people and partnership work with external agencies in terms of maximising social capital for the well-being of the young people in their project. The enquiry meetings with the team leaders were informal, with the leaders being able to discuss issues hindering the connection of young people to the wider community in Rise and Happyside County in terms of employment, social amenities and the structure of the external services in relation to their funding requirement and the location of the project in Rise and Happyside County.
- Support staff. Interviews with the support staff were carried out in a semi-structured form. The staff were informed prior to the interview about the purpose of

the research enquiry and its intended benefits to all concerned. The staff signed the consent form to clarify that they went through the enquiry's briefing procedure. The questions were divided into various components of homelessness and the well-being of young people in connection to social capital.

- Young homeless people. These interviews were carried out in informal and semi-formal interview formats depending on the circumstances of the individuals. The young people who took part understood the purpose of the enquiry and the protocol already described for recording and anonymising their responses. The components of the interview comprised homelessness issues, their effects and their relationship with social capital.
- The earliest project enquiries at the Turnaround Project took place between May 2008 and January 2009. The enquiries involved:
  - Three participatory sessions with staff to discuss the general overview of homelessness and how social capital can be used to enhance the well-being of homeless people in supported housing.
  - Interview sessions with six residents of the Turnaround Project. The residents were referred to as Participants 01 to 06.
- The outcome of the interview and participatory sessions with the residents and staff of the Turnaround project were not analysed due to the small amount of information gathered in comparison to the young homeless people on the Moonday project. It was difficult for the staff of the Turnaround Project to target many of their tenants to take part in this enquiry due to the numbers of serious incidents taking place in the service. A decision was made not to analyse the result of the Turnaround project, so as to avoid confusion. Nevertheless, some useful information about Residents 01, 04, 05, and 06 was briefly used in Chapter 7 of this project report.

## **6.2 Thematic Analysis**

Thematic analysis is historically a conventional practice in qualitative research that involves searching through data to identify any recurrent patterns. The information collated

from the young people and staff was written down manually, as per the request of the participants. Only one participant requested that her responses be collated using an audio tape recorder.

The responses from the participants, including staff and customers from both projects, were collated, analysed and processed in order of subject headings corresponding to the areas of investigations carried out with the participants. They were structured in such a way that the effect of the homelessness and social deprivation was clearly outlined according to the category of the questions.

The information gathered from the participants was analysed in the form of text to clarify the problems being faced by homeless people and validates the issues emerging from the literature review on homelessness and social capital. In essence, the data analysis from this research contextualised the findings on what led to homelessness issues, with the problems young homeless people encountered and written out in the research being identified as social disadvantage. The effect of homelessness on the health of young people was categorised in the data analysis.

The key statements made by the young people in the research enquiry were clearly annotated and, as such, analysed to provide reliability of the data. Analysis was structured so the information provided at the interview by the participants was categorised into the key areas of the enquiries, including the reason for the homelessness, the impact of the homelessness on the life of young people, and the social and economic participation of the homeless people in the community. The data was analysed in such a way that it provided validity for the literature review on homelessness background and the main aspect of social capital from a theoretical and policy perspective.

I will therefore use the above to conclude that the application of action research had indeed enabled the participants (both staff and young people) to make a contribution to the findings and the outcome of this research through their learning experience. The action research was to promote social interaction between the participants and the researcher, and the evidence of observation is oriented to the involvement of the participants as a process of change, with the researcher maintaining his position as an agent driving forward that change across different levels of personnel.

## **Chapter 7      Project Analysis and Discussion**

This chapter covers the research findings that eventually led to a wide discussion drawing on the literature review of theoretical, policy and practical perspectives. The discussions covers up-to-date information on the reasons for homelessness and also its effects. This chapter also covers the distinctions between the types of social capital and how adjustments can be made on bonding social capital through bridging social capital to maximise the provision of support and wider community-based services to vulnerable homeless people. The responses from the participants underwent content analysis, as described in Chapter 6, as in the table below.

### **7.1 Analysis of the Key Findings**

Five frontline staff known as Worker 1, Worker 2, Worker 3, Worker 4, and Worker 5, as well as three managers, participated in the interviews and their responses are summarised in the table below.

**Table 7.1 Summary of enquiries from staff of the Moonday project**

<b>Common reasons for homelessness of the young people</b>	<b>Does the community accept them for who they are?</b>	<b>What are the common networks of the young people?</b>	<b>Does the young person have family connection? Does their family show interest with their support?</b>
All staff gave family and relationship breakdown as the reason for their homelessness.	Staff said only social businesses and statutory organisations accepted them, but were rejected by others outside these two groups.	Young people have strong connection with their friends and agencies that are working with the Moonday project.	Generally, all the frontline staff interviewed said that some young people have family connection, with some not having it due to relationship breakdown that needed to be mended.
All staff said that some of the young people came to the project from a foster care placement.	There are private and non-statutory or voluntary organisations, and including few other people in the local community, that do not want to hear about them or get involved with them.	Staff said that most of the young people are connected with drug and alcohol counselling. Some engage with the local college.	All staff said that some parents are showing interest in the progress of their young people in terms of their support.
Support staff also said that parents asked young people to leave home due to overcrowding, with the young people feeling isolated as a result of this decision.	Staff said that when the project was at its main site before temporary relocation, they always received complaints about young people. Few neighbours also wrote a letter to local MPs to raise serious complaints about young people's behaviour.	Staff also said that some young people engage with the care coordinator through their child care package from social services.	Parents are showing interest in the progress the young people are making by talking to the staff and offering practical help, e.g. taking them out on shopping trips.
Some parents asked young people to leave home at the age of 17 due to benefit implications.			Staff also said that in most cases, young people did not want family to get involved with their

			support plan unless their consent was given.
Engagement of young people in health and social care service in the community.	Accessibility to employment and training opportunities in the local borough.	Engagement of young people in education/college.	Does the community involve young people in the local agenda, leisure and other social activities and registration for election? If not, what can be done to connect the young people to the community?
All young people are registered with the local GPs.	15 young people are unemployed due to the employer's refusal to give them the opportunity.	Very few young people engage in education at the local college.	Not much in the youth clubs for young people to engage in.
Young people also have access to a community mental health team in the Borough Council.	Employers restricted the young people due to the reputation of the project.	Young people do not want to engage in an education programme due to low esteem.	Not everybody can afford the Gym, even with the discount given to the young people at Kent Foyer.
Young people are receiving professional counselling in a Drug and Alcohol programme.	Some young people are entrenched with or trapped by the benefit system, hence the fear of seeking a job.	Staff said that some young people always tell them that they cannot always see the link between education and career prospects due to the circumstances surrounding their health and homelessness.	Fewer social activities for the young people in the community.
Staff said that advice sessions and support are also available in the Borough Council for young fathers.	Support staff also said that some young people are generally demotivated and lack insight to benefit from employment opportunities.		Young people are drinking and engaging in anti-social behaviour – they don't have meaningful activities and social events.

**Table 7.2      The outcome of interviews with the young people at the Moonday project**

<b>Reasons for homelessness</b>	<b>Existing and new connection</b>	<b>Community reaction to homeless people/ young people and rough sleeping</b>	<b>Network of support agencies</b>
7 out of 17 young people became homeless due to breakdown of relationship.	13 out 17 young people remain connected with their old friends.	10 out of 17 young people said that the community did not accept them with their homeless status and reputation of the Foyer.	3 young people out of 17 are connected with a Care Coordinator for support.
3 out of 17 young people became homeless at the end of a foster care placement.	4 out of 17 young people established new connection.	4 out of 17 young people said that the community accepted them with their homeless status.	9 young people out of 17 are receiving counselling and support on drug awareness from a local drug and alcohol project.
two out of 17 young people became homeless due to eviction/anti-social behaviour.	9 out of 17 young people remain connected with their family (including reconnection back to the family).	3 out of 17 young people from a care background said that they are not affected by the homeless status.	8 out of 17 young people are aware of agencies they can access freely, and among them are GPs and health clinics, CAB, Connexions, family group centres, and community mental health teams (CMHT).
1 out of 17 young people became homeless due to overcrowding.	5 out of 17 people are not ready to reconnect with their family.	3 out 17 young people said that they had moved around children placements before coming to the Foyer.	-----
1 out of 17 young people became homeless due to mental health.	3 out of 17 young people cannot be connected back to their family due to a care order on the parents.	6 out of 17 young people slept rough on the street before coming to the Foyer.	-----
1 out of 17 young people became	-----	8 young people of 17 went sofa surfing	-----



homeless due to a loss of job.		before coming to the project.	
1 out of 17 young people became homeless due to abusive behaviour.	-----	-----	-----
1 out of 17 young people left home due to disagreement over sexual orientation.	-----	-----	-----
Trust.	Person-centred support plan	Accessibility to employment.	Accessibility to education and accessibility to social engagement/community participation.
Only 4 out of 17 young people said that they are able to develop trust in anyone, including professionals, but this will happen over a period of time.	13 out of 17 young people said that they have control over their support plan and, as such, are responsible for setting their goals and aspirations.	11 out of 17 young people said that it is difficult for them to get a job due to previous tenants' shoplifting.	6 out of 17 young people are in training and education. 14 out of 17 young people said that there are not enough community participation and social events/groups, including leisure centres, for young people in the community.
5 out of 17 young people cannot confirm whether they trust new professionals or not, but they are able to work with them with 'tight lips' on confidential information.	4 out of 17 young people said that they are not involved with the development of their support plan.	two out of 17 young people said that they did not have difficulties in accessing employment opportunities.	6 out of 17 young people said that they cannot go into college due to their benefit claim.  3 out of 17 young people are content on few social amenities available to young people.
-----	---	two out of 17 young people are in employment.	two out of 17 young people said that they cannot be bothered.
----	-----	two out of 17 young people said that they are not bothered about employment opportunities.	5 out of 17 young people said that they are not ready for college yet.

Tables 7.1 and 7.2 above show the collective summary report of the key findings through interviews with staff and young homeless people from Supported Housing Ltd under the following categories:

- Reasons for young people becoming homeless;
- Level of integration or relationship of the young people and other people from the community;
- The current network's profile of the young people;
- Family connection of the young people, including support;
- Engagement with health and social services;
- Accessibility of young people to employment and training opportunities in Rise and Happyside County;
- Engagement of young people in education;
- Access to leisure and social activities; and
- Involving young people in local agenda consultation.

**Relationship breakdown with family:** In the interviews with staff, Worker 1 said that:

Over the years, I had seen young people coming through the Project's door to receive support from us following a breakdown of relationship with their parents. Young people always said to us that they could no longer cope with the domineering power of their parents and hence they prefer to move out of the house and become homeless.

Worker 1 also said that the behaviour of the young people could result in friction with their parents. In some cases, young people might not be able to get on with a parent's new partner, with such conditions sometimes leading to young people having to leave the family home.

Seven out of 17 young homeless people interviewed said that they became homeless due to a breakdown of relationships with the family. This is the highest figure among the causes of homelessness given. The Shelter report on homelessness also identified a breakdown of relationships as the highest cause of homelessness, at 41 per cent of the street homeless people they interviewed (Shelter, 2007).

A typical example of homelessness due to relationship breakdown was given during a direct enquiry with two young people that had had similar problems with their parents. Both participants 13 and 15 stated that they got kicked out of the house due to arguments with their stepmother. For example, Participant 15 is an 18-year-old female young homeless person who was told to leave the family home by her dad following a long-term disagreement with her stepmother. She became homeless at the age of 16 and she went about lodging from one friend's house to another for over 12 months before her admission to the Moonday Supported Housing project in 2009. She described her homelessness as a terrible experience due to depression over the death of her mother and how she was treated by her family and boyfriend. The effect of the agony experienced by this young homeless person resulted in her taking a year's break from her studies; she is planning to go back by next September. More on the effect of homelessness will be explored further at a later stage of this report. However, it should be noted that in interviews the support workers also stated that the most common reason for the homelessness of young people is the breakdown of relationships. They gave instances of breakdowns of relationships, including:

- Conflict between young persons and their parents, which in most cases resulted in the parents asking the young person to leave the family home;
- Separation of parents, which could alter the structure of the family in terms of a new partner coming into the family relationship. The young person might not like

the new partner, with disagreements potentially becoming aggravated to the extent that the parent will end up asking their child to leave the house.

In essence, the above findings confirmed the literature research presented at the start of this project report, wherein, according to the Crisis research report (2000), the cause of homelessness in the UK is widely accepted as being a relationship and family breakdown due to disputes with parents, domestic abuse, marital breakdown or bereavement, and such breakdowns could result in family ties being cut off and the homeless person thus becoming subject to social isolation and informal support (from friends and family members).

**Foster care placement:** Some young people stated that the reason for young people becoming homeless was as a result of their leaving foster care to progress to a stage where they can develop independent living skills. The literature research of this project report established:

- how the parent(s) could lose their right to look after their child or children through legal orders, which may be due to the parent(s) presenting a risk behaviour that could jeopardise the safety of the child or children;
- how young people moving from foster care families to temporary accommodation under different care packages, as well as the frequent changes of environment this entails, could be traumatising for a young person;

Circumstances around care placement arrangements could lead to young people or teenagers assuming adult responsibility at a very early part of their life in comparison to other children in the same age group. The work of Randall and Brown (1999) was introduced in the literature review to clarify how the lack of stability associated with being in care can restrict care leavers to lower levels of educational participation and attainment, as well as higher levels of mental health problems. Randall and Brown also confirmed that

restrictions on education can lead to problems in the future, meaning that those in care might face problems, not only when they are leaving care but in later life.

The above literature research on the role of foster care placements as a cause of homelessness was confirmed in the outcomes of the interviews carried out with staff and young people, as follows. Staff confirmed in interview that they work with two young people who are under social services placement at their project. This category of young homeless people came to the supported housing project through a foster care scheme.

Worker 3 said:

At least there is always another chance for young people coming from foster homes to come to this type of supported housing designed for young people and where they can see themselves as part of the family. Young people are receiving a warm environment, which they cannot have on the street.

It can be emphasised that 3 out of 17 young homeless people interviewed for this project explained the reason for their homelessness as being at the end of their foster care placement, hence their reason for starting a new life as a tenant of supported housing for the next level of their social care placement under the direction of social services.

Participant 14 is a male resident of Supported Housing Ltd who said that a care order was placed on his biological mother a few years ago due to her alcohol addiction, being perceived as someone unfit to look after him. For this reason, he had to go through two different families to be fostered as a child. Participant 14 said that he was grateful for the two families that accepted him into their household, where he was loved and well looked after. Participant 14 said:

I was hurt looking back at my early life where my childhood experience was more to do with moving from one family to the other. I was deprived of a child and mother closeness until recently when I was connected back to my mother. My

reconnection back to my mother became helpful to her lifestyle as she had to give up her addiction to alcohol in order to get closer to me. But this is the story of my life and I don't want to see a child experiencing this type of selfish behaviour from their mother.

Participant 14 in this case described how he was emotionally hurt by not being brought up by his biological mother. From the above, it can be argued that emotional breakdown as a result of a parent's dependency on substance abuse and alcohol dependency may seriously affect the life of a child. Bancroft et al. (2004) emphasised how the effects of substance abuse could create serious problems for most young homeless people and established how the young people interviewed had used their experience to justify that their parents were unable consistently to provide practical and emotional care for them as a result of their alcohol and drug dependency. The young people who had related their experience also mentioned that the effect of parental substance abuse could damage the lifestyle of a child through the parents' neglect of their duty of care for them. Such damage to lifestyle could result in the young person developing anxiety and unhappiness, ultimately leading to violent behaviour with social stigma for the young person.

Bancroft et al. (2004) used the interviews conducted with young people to inform their readers how the childhood of many young people had been shortened through having to assume early responsibility for their own and others' well-being. However, the mother of Participant 14 had the opportunity to reconnect back to her son, who is now 18, through a less restrictive child care order. Participant 14 said at interview that he could only make this happen through a condition he had agreed with his mother that she would give up alcohol and start acting like a responsible person. Participant 14 said that the condition he had laid for his biological mother helped with the family reconnection and contributed to

her better health. The advantage of family connection and its contribution to well-being shall be explored in a later stage of this report.

***Homelessness due to eviction and job loss:***

At the interview enquiry, three young people said that they became homeless due to their eviction from previous accommodation. The young homeless people associated their eviction with low income and loss of jobs. One who became homeless due to eviction said that there was a lack of support and tenancy advice when he was in rented accommodation. The young person said that he has been receiving support on how to sustain his tenancy through money management and independent living skills. There are other reasons for homelessness, as gathered from residents during their sessions.

***Homelessness due to mental illness:***

Interviews with the support workers confirmed that mental health and the disability needs of a young person could lead to homelessness, as this stress created by the health of a young person could be too much for the parents to bear. The literature research conducted on the causes of homelessness highlighted that 35 per cent of the people sleeping rough in London have mental health support needs (Broadway, 2009). Therefore, the help from CMHT and supporters could provide invaluable support to the young person with mental health needs and their parents.

It was confirmed in Chapter 2 of this project that mental health breakdown is common among homeless people. Participant 10 said that her mental health breakdown resulted in her present homeless situation. She thus stated that ‘my parents cannot cope with my psychosis episode and all that they can do is to ask social services to remove me from the family home, and this led to my homelessness’. This account of homelessness can be linked to the view of staff during the interview, wherein a place like supported housing

is ideal for young people with mental health to receive support for their issue through a programme called recovery journey. The stage whereby homeless people with mental health needs receive support from staff from supported housing and other agencies for their well-being is called the 'recovery journey'.

***Homelessness due to sexual orientation:***

During the interviews, one participant explained how she was asked to leave home as a result of making her sexual orientation known to her parents. She said: 'I cannot understand the reason why I should be deprived of my right to freely express the type of person who I am in relation to gender, but what I got out of this was an eviction from my family home'. This type of homelessness category is not common, but this project identified the need to recognise it in terms of providing support to homeless people who might have suffered rejection from family, friends and from the wider community, including the police, LGBT Helpline and Local Authority.

Other categories of homelessness include overcrowding, explained by a young person as being the reason for her homelessness. Participant 8 said that she had to leave her sister's house due to overcrowded conditions: 'I had to leave my sister's, more so that the baby is on the way to make the total numbers of occupiers to four people in a one-bedroom flat.'

In general, Workers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 as well as their managers also recognised and confirmed some additional reasons for young people becoming homeless:

- Once child benefit is stopped, some parents might not want to accommodate the young person any longer and, as such, they will ask the young person to leave the family home.



- Some young people had to leave the family home due to domestic violence, financial abuse, and sexual and emotional abuse.
- If the family are relocating house, young people might refuse to follow the family to a new location.

### ***7.11 Analysis of Previous Interviews with Residents of Other Supported Housing Projects***

Four current service users and two former service users from the Supported Housing Turnaround project were interviewed between December 2008 and June 2009. A participatory forum was also carried out with the staff of the Turnaround project. The brief outcome of the earliest enquiry with staff and residents shows that the majority of the residents did not get on well with their family. Participants 01, 02 and 04 said that they did not get on with their parents before going into prison and that they were unsurprised that their parents did not want them back in the family house after their term. Thus, they ended up being tenants of the young ex-offender project. Participant 05 said that he had no choice other than to go into supported housing to start a new life. He said in a telephone interview that he realised how he had messed up and that the only way to get his life back was to go into the homeless project and start all over again. In short, the outcome of the interviews with both current and former service users of the Turnaround project established how bad behaviour could lead to young people becoming homeless as well as ending up with prison terms. The staff at Supported Housing in both the Moonday and Turnaround projects confirmed this was one of the reasons people became homeless.

### **7.12 Conclusion on Reasons for Homelessness**

Before going into further discussion on the effect of homelessness on vulnerable people and young people living in supported housing, and how increasing social capital could be of great benefit to their well-being, this chapter will conclude with an examination of the validity of the research enquiry. This will confirm that the causes of homelessness are universal across the UK, regardless of geographic location and the nature and type of temporary accommodation. Using the analysis of the information stated above, the reasons for homelessness are:

- **Relationship causes:** This can include a family breakdown, people involved in an abusive relationship and tension between a stepfather or stepmother, as in the case of Participant 15 who was asked to leave her home due to tension between her and her stepmother. This case justified how a new structure in the family could lead to relationship breakdown, thereby splitting the family.
- **Institutional factors:** This may include people who have been living in foster care and young people under social service care arrangements, as well as those who have been in prison (as in the case of all ex-offender projects). This type of homelessness also extends to people who have been in mental health institutions on either a short- or long-term basis or young people/adults who have been in the armed forces, both at home and abroad.
- **Personal factors:** This is relevant to the type of homelessness where the health of a young person or adult could be too severe for them to live in a family accommodation. Drugs and alcohol dependency could also lead to homelessness, criminal activities and self-neglect, including a duty of care for other people.
- **Structural factors:** These can be classified as a link to all other causes of homelessness in the sense that the impact of low income and unemployment may lead to the inability of people to sustain tenancy and daily living. Giddens (1998) talks about how structuration happens — how people's everyday lives become explicable in terms of wider structural factors that are often not apparent on the surface, but are deep-seated. Class, gender and ethnicity are important examples.

The staff of the Moonday project mentioned that Rise and Happyside County is a deprived area with fewer job opportunities for parents and young people. The economic status of the majority of the young homeless people at Supported Housing is that of unemployment. In general, structural factors may include poverty, unemployment and a lack of reasonable housing.

### ***7.13 Definition of Homelessness from the Findings So Far***

This project can now use the research findings that emerged from the causes of homeless people to offer a definition of homelessness from the author's perspective:

People who have nowhere to live or no roof above their head; the story and example of this was sighted in the research enquiry that established that 7 people out of 17 became homeless due to relationship breakdown and, as such, had no place to stay until they eventually were admitted to the Moonday Supported Housing project for temporary accommodation with assured shorthold tenancy, which does not guarantee permanent tenancy.

The story of Participants 13 and 15, who left their families' home only to end up squatting with their friends, describes a certain category of homeless people known as 'hidden homeless'. It was true that they were not roofless, but they could not be comfortable with sofa surfing or staying in another person's accommodation as a lodger. The tenancy agreement does not regard this type of lodging as legal, hence the reason for seeking admission within the supported housing sector. People who perceive homelessness as being roofless do not see this category as homeless; yet they are without a home, and if they cannot find a suitable accommodation, in time they will be living on the street or in a temporary accommodation.

It also emerged from the research enquiry that people who came to supported housing or a temporary supported accommodation environment still perceive themselves as

homeless because of the maximum length of two years' duration in such an environment. For example, Worker 1 described people living in a temporary supported accommodation as people of homeless status until they leave the environment for permanent independent living. Worker 1 therefore said:

Young people in this project are still homeless because they are living an unsettled life until they are being re-housed into their own permanent accommodation with a roof over their head, a place where they can stay longer following a successful programme(s) of independent living skill, health support, budget management, rehabilitation engagements on alcohol, drug and criminality, and a tenancy sustainment programme.

Given the above and including the overview of the causes of homelessness, in the author's view the term 'homelessness' is overly emotive, given what the homeless people have suffered. Therefore, the next section will cover the effects of homelessness on young people.

## **7.2 The General Effect of Homelessness on Young People**

Having discussed the reasons for homelessness in the previous chapter, it is now necessary to discuss other key findings from the interviews conducted with the residents and staff. These are the effects of homelessness on young people, and how young people are struggling to cope with their daily lives as a result of homelessness, personal problems, structural factors, and the behaviour of other people towards them. To this end, this research project examines how far, if at all possible, social capital can resolve the effect of homelessness on the health of vulnerable homeless people. This question is drawn upon as one of the aims of this project; for this reason, the working relationship between a homeless person, their main support worker from supported housing, and external

specialist agency workers can be regarded as key factors in promoting the well-being of the vulnerable person.

### **7.2.1 Health Issues**

The effect of homelessness on people could be significant due to the different types of experience and categories of homelessness. Having nowhere to sleep and needing to ‘sofa surf’ in friends’ homes can seriously affect the living conditions of young homeless people. The effect of homelessness on health is not confined to rough sleepers, but is extended to other categories of homelessness. For example, people in temporary accommodation with friends or in hostels have little stability, often having to share kitchens and bathrooms with little privacy or security. Homeless people living in temporary accommodation or sharing a small space in living apartments with friends may also experience problems with damp or overcrowded conditions (Fitzpatrick, Pleace & Jones, 2005).

This project found common health problems arising from the effect of homelessness include mental health problems. Poor mental health including self-harm and suicidal tendencies was experienced in at least 6 people out of 17 young homeless people interviewed at the Moonday project. Participant 10 said in the interview:

I feel neglected by my parents as I was kicked out of the house two years ago as a result of my mental health situation. Coping with my mental health condition is traumatising enough for me, but to combine my mental health problem with the memory of being hurt by my family is overwhelming and depressing enough to bear, but the only way of coping is to talk to someone I can trust or to harm myself if I cannot get a trusted person to share my feelings with.

People deal with past experience and damage caused by other people to their lives in a different way. According to the above findings, Participant 10 adopted self-harm as a

way to deal with her distress, in addition to support from her GP and trusted staff on issues of mental health.

This chapter is about the impact of homelessness on general health, but the aspect of self-harm cannot be ignored, as it is very common among young homeless people. The team leader said that the majority of young homeless people in the project are self-harming and that she has been able to support them by running a self-harm group session where they can talk openly about their problems and seek alternative coping mechanisms. This is good practice that can be recommended to other supported housing sectors, as the group of young people have been able to open up to one another for support.

The above comments from the team leader clearly emphasised how people can perceive self-harm as being an overarching way of coping with problems triggered by emotional abuse and their general health situation.

The above group bond together and support each other through open and honest discussion, with observation being confirmed by the team leader coordinating this group session. He also said that young people in the group or joining the group will have an informal agreement to keep all discussions private and confidential to the group.

The example of best practice from this group can be used to argue, but to a lesser extent, that people of the same circumstances can support one another in their social group. However, they will rely on strong ties to connect them to the wider community for support in the sense that people in the same circumstances can only provide information based on their similar experiences. This is a strong argument for Granovetter's theory of weak ties (1973). As discussed below, Granovetter's theory states that your closest associates are likely to have roughly the same information that you have. In contrast, your more distant acquaintances are more likely to have something new for you. Granovetter used job

searching as his example: your close friends are more likely to know about the same job openings you do, and so on.

A revised edition of Mind's report on 'Understanding self-harm' by Sharman (2007) clarified the position of people who self-harm as likely to have gone through difficult situations as children or young adults at a time when they did not receive support, emotional help or a trusted person or someone to confide in with their situation. The report also identified categories of people who can be in this situation as those who might have been physically or sexually abused, neglected, separated from someone they loved, harassed, assaulted, isolated, put under intolerable pressure, made homeless or sent into care, hospital or into other institutions.

The information collated from the interviews with young people identified the effect of homelessness on their health. For example, three young people interviewed stated that they were placed in foster care through social service placements before coming to the project. However, the young people in foster care will still be categorised as being secondarily homeless, as they do not have permanent accommodation.

It was also confirmed that six young people used to sleep rough on the street before coming to the Moonday project. For example, Participant 16 said: 'I slept in a caravan before coming to this accommodation a year ago'. Participant 1 also highlighted:

I lost my job and the house in November 2009. As a result of this, I went to a tent to sleep for one month, which is better than sleeping in the park. Yes, life in the park is too open for anyone to attack homeless people, people are wicked, they set fire to homeless people, but I was lucky that they did not attack me.

Young people also stated in the interviews how they had experienced the 'sofa surfing' type of rough sleeping. In this situation, the young people said that they moved around

from one friend's house to another or to their friends' family homes to sleep at night on the sofa.

### ***Effect of homelessness on well-being***

Seven young people said that homelessness, as a result of an unsettled base and past experience, had indeed affected their well-being and readjustment to life by taking time out of studies and adding restriction to certain ways of life, with the example of few homeless persons being a case in point: they did not want to pursue further studies at college for fear of losing their benefits.

The findings are an evidential reference for anyone to observe and to concede that the effect of homelessness on young people at the Moonday project may be significant, as it removes stability from people's lives. Drawing on the work undertaken in this project and its findings, it has been gathered that young people, as well as other vulnerable homeless people, are more likely to experience disconnection from health services in the community. Emotional and behavioural problems such as distress and depression could ultimately lead to a crisis situation, anger, and aggressive behaviour. Therefore, their coming to stay in supported housing is not only about shelter, but is to assist them with a wide range of support that could turn their life around for the better. This is the argument highlighted early in this research report concerning Third, Yanetta, Fitzpatrick and Klinker, who clarified that 'homelessness is commonly associated with a range of other social circumstances, beyond the simple need for shelter' (Third and Yanetta, 2000; Fitzpatrick, Kemp & Klinker, 2000).

### ***7.22 What Are the Responsibilities of the Young People in Enhancing Their Well-Being Through a Network of Support Agencies?***

It should be noted that young persons have a responsibility in engaging with health support services in order to address their emotional problems. Their Housing Support Worker will



empower and motivate them to engage with the service within a specified framework that is clear and reinforced in their support plan. The support worker must take a person-centred approach where control is given to the young person to decide on goals to accomplish improvement of their health as one aspect of their support plan topics. Social capital allows individuals to resolve collective problems more easily and individuals might often be better off if they cooperate, with everybody doing his or her work. Social capital (at an individual level) also refers to a system of interpersonal networks (Dasgupta, 2002) that enhances cooperation and collaboration, which also helps to create economic opportunities.

To achieve the above, young homeless people need to change their networks from those they bond with (other young homeless and/or other young people with drug, alcohol and mental health problems) to those who may help them to widen their horizons through new information and references. There must be a notion of building trust and confidence in order for a young person in supported housing to work with external agencies and to engage with internal staff. Eleven young people interviewed had said that a relationship with their support workers and other professionals did not take place immediately.

Participant 3 said:

You cannot take a risk of trusting somebody you recently met on a short notice. Trusting a worker in a position of authority is like entrusting them with your life, for you have to tell them everything about your life history. It took me four months to fully develop relationship with my worker.

One of the young people said that they cannot trust any professionals and their key workers and that he will only engage with them whenever convenient for him. Another five young people said that they cannot comment about their working relationship with their

professionals and support workers, as they just want the accommodation and to talk to their peers for support.

From the statement by Participant 3 above, it can be perceived that this young homeless person in question considered the idea of working with support workers and the external specialist agency workers as being with people that put them under a structure, in terms of one Giddens (1991) on structuration. This refers to structures as rules and resources embedded in the memory process or of an agent who called upon them through knowledgeability required to perform social actions. Giddens referred to knowledgeability as the source of information for the agents who know what to do and why they have to do it. Giddens identified how the agents can draw upon structure within knowledgeability in three forms, project work being the key aspect.

Giddens uses domination through his work on structuration as control over economic resources, allocation of materials and control over people. Giddens recognised how confining individuals within a structure can generate institutionalisation.

Institutionalisation does not produce independences, as highlighted in one of the RAL Claims submitted to Middlesex University in the early part of this research programme. The RAL Claim in question referred to how changes were identified and successfully implemented in one of the supported housing projects in order to break dependences and to promote the integration of the institutionalised people into the community, but through a notion of trust that can be developed over a period time.

The notion of trust can be related people's readiness to take the risk of relying on others for support. Some people could go as far as assessing the risk benefit of their relationship with people supporting them. During the interview with the residents of Supported Housing Ltd the majority of those who said that it takes time to trust their

support workers and external agencies came across as people with low self-esteem and totally de-motivated. However, there was a case of two people (Participants 10 and 15) who were just being negative, regardless of how much the service can do for them. One of these people had made it clear in the interview that no professionals or practitioners could help them, as they are able to go out and talk to friends they have known for a long period to help them with their situation. For example, Participant 15, who had a history of depression, mentioned among other comments, 'I had a brief connection with the counsellor, who provided me with some sessions, but I did not find the outcome as useful because I don't believe they can provide me with satisfactory sessions, but I am happy to talk to my friends for support'. It should be noted that, without trust, it will be difficult for a vulnerable person to engage with the support services required to enhance their well-being. Generally, trust is needed to produce confidence, which is linked to engagement with support services through the key support worker responsible for coordinating the network of support agencies and service users.

The above discussion shows that trust must be developed in an informal setting through social relationships that grow or develop over time in order for social capital to be effectively utilised among a group of people working to achieve a common purpose. Granovetter has stressed that social relations are mainly responsible for the production of trust in economic life. He believes that trust can be made manifest when agreements are 'embedded' within a larger structure of personal relations and social networks (Granovetter 1985: 488–493). The notion of trust will be developed in a further discussion.

### **7.3 Economic Engagement of Young Homeless People**

This section discusses the problems that young homeless people face in Supported Housing through key findings and shows the impact of anti-social behaviour on the relationships of

the homeless with the wider community. It clarifies the benefits of social, economic and psychological engagement of young homeless people in the labour market.

The labour market, according to a dictionary definition, is the function that exists through the intervention of employers and workers. Labour is the measure of the work done by a human being. In short, work or employment involves a contract between two parties where one of them is hired as an employee and the other is an employer.

Social capital is concerned with social networks and norms that generate shared understandings, knowledge, trust, and reciprocity that underpin cooperation and collective action for mutual benefit, and creates the base for economic prosperity. Therefore, we cannot talk about employment without referring to knowledge, personality and abilities. Human capital refers to the competences, knowledge and personality attributes embodied in the ability to perform at work in relation to production of economic value. Lucas (1988) enlightened us about the relationship between social and human capital in terms of how they complement each other. Development of human capital actually creates the base for social capital which, for Lucas, is nothing but the externality of human capital. He referred to externality as the social increase returns to scale, which can be found in the production sector. This section also explores how the formation of social capital operates through the development of human capital, which is created from productive consumption.

This chapter covered recommendations required for addressing the problems young people encountered with regard to accessing employment opportunities.

The key issues on accessibility to employment

***Key findings on employment:***

- The majority of those interviewed (9 people out of 17) said that they were facing difficulties in engaging with employment. This difficulty appears to be due to the past reputation of the young people who used to live in the supported housing;
- Four young people were not ready to engage in the labour market, partly due to full-time education and due to a lack of motivation; and
- Two people out of 17 young homeless people interviewed are in part-time employment, while two people out of 17 people are in full-time employment.

In interviews, all the staff (frontline staff and their team leaders/managers) highlighted the problem young people had in relation to employment:

- Young people have lost their confidence due to their homelessness and may also have low self-esteem.
- Some could not engage with the labour market due to learning difficulties, including dyslexia. There are a few that will struggle to get work because they do not have qualifications, having dropped out of school at the age of 14 or 15. Some young people were bullied out of school.
- Some of the young people became caught up with the benefit system by coming from a family that relied on state benefit for living throughout their life, consequently lacking a positive role model to follow.
- Sleeping habits are another major factor that prevent young people from competing for a job opportunity. There are a few young people in the Foyer who go to bed late and stay in bed most of the daytime; with this habit, they find it difficult to wake up in the day and engage in meaningful activities.
- The reputation of the project may have prevented young people in the project from securing a job.

Support Worker 1 said:

We encouraged four of our boys to apply for a job at Town Supermarket and to use a different address, but to our surprise they were shortlisted for a job — they applied for an offer of employment. The reputation of the project prevented young people in the Foyer from securing a job. In this case, the employers have been making unreasonable demands on the applicants as a result of the previous tenants shoplifting in Town Supermarket and other shops.

All support workers clarified during the interview session that residents had applied for a job with the local Town Supermarket superstore on more than one occasion, but their applications were not looked into by the employer. However, the same people applied again to Town Supermarket using an alternative address on their applications and were shortlisted for interviews. This suggests that employers like Town Supermarket are making decisions based upon the reputation of young people, knowing that they live in the accommodation; this action can be perceived as postcode discrimination.

### ***Discussion***

It is very obvious from the key findings that some employers in Rise and Happyside County are preventing homeless people from engaging in the labour market. The reputation of the previous tenants of supported housing should not have been a barrier to the current residents who did not commit such crimes, and ‘giving a dog a bad name’. The reputation of the Supported Housing Moonday Project is not something that current residents can or should be expected to address on their own. It is the responsibility of the project management staff to decide a strategy that will address this. Although this strategy might include the opinion of the current residents, it should be led by management.

The team leader or manager responsible for support services said that this is an ongoing issue, with the evidence being strong enough to determine that the current residents were denied access to participating in the employment market in Rise and

Happyside County unless they continued to lie on their application form about their address.

The exclusion of young people from the labour market by employers has made the majority of the homeless people inactive. The decision of employers not to look into the application submitted by these young people has indeed contributed to the attitude of some people not to look actively for work.

Some of the young homeless people that engaged in this project enquiry also expressed their unwillingness to work due to their mental health condition, low esteem, the benefit trap, and the fear of losing their tenancy through rent arrears.

Generally, none of the above reasons should prevent young people from engaging with the labour market, as their mental health condition, including low self-esteem, can be complemented through their involvement in a meaningful daytime activity. One of the support workers interviewed said that engagement in an activity such as employment, whether paid or voluntary, could override or suppress negative thinking or reactions against well-being. Voluntary work could also enable potential employers to revise their biased opinion about the Foyer's residents.

Many young people said that they were trapped in the benefit system, as they believe this to be the only means of survival. They even said that getting work would not be a great help because the earnings would take them off welfare benefit, and leave them with responsibility for their accommodation charges. Some said that they would not be entitled to the free services they are currently receiving. This may be understandable to a certain extent, but relying on state benefit is not the ideal situation for anyone to achieve a fulfilled lifestyle. Kolev and Saget made it known that:

A troubled entry into the world of work has serious welfare repercussions on youths in terms of increased risk of income poverty and alteration of human and social capital. It also induces responses among youths which are not always socially desirable. (Kolev & Saget, 2005: 161)

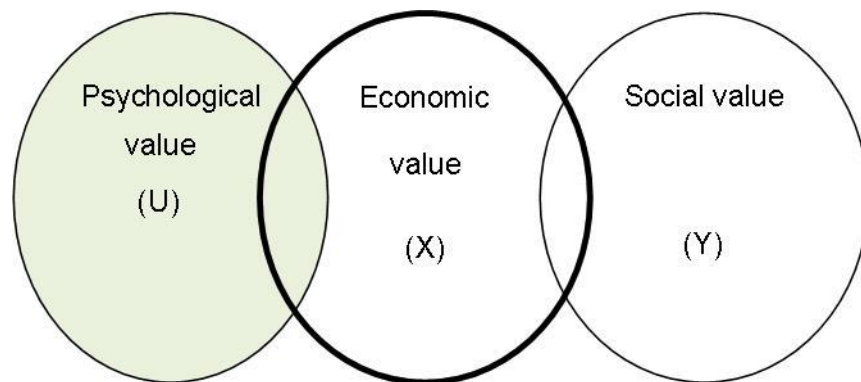
The major issue resulting from the above is to confirm the economic status of any unemployed young person or young adult relying on state benefits. Their choices and potential for a healthy living standard will always be limited. A lack of engagement could make them become idle and feed a tendency to engage in criminal activities. Janunkar and Kapucinski have also argued for a causal connection between youth unemployment and crime (Janunkar & Kapucinski, 1992: 59), and it was confirmed by Fares and Tionson that idleness due to a lack of work can lead to criminal activities. To this end, Fares and Tionson have stated that the link between youth unemployment and social exclusion can clearly be established: inability to find a job creates a sense of vulnerability, uselessness and idleness among young people and can heighten the attraction to become involved in illegal activities (Fares & Tionson, 2007: 11).

Participant 11 was in a full-time paid job at the time of this enquiry and has been responsible for full rent in respect of his accommodation. He said that he has been able to afford to live without relying on state benefit through sufficient income from his paid job. He said that 'living in the hostel to pursue means for my daily living has made a significant change in my life. I wish the other people could see the benefit of work in someone's life'. Therefore, Participant 11 is a role model for the other young people in the Foyer, as his case confirmed that engaging in the labour market could lead to healthy living conditions and the potential to sustain personal economic well-being. The statement of Participant 11 led to further work on the value of work.



### ***The value of work***

I will use this chapter to briefly discuss the value of work, stemming from the perception of Participant 11 to the economic, social and psychological reasons of why some people engage in the labour market. This chapter will also examine the relationship between social capital and human capital. In general, people work for social, economic or psychological reasons.



**Figure 7.1      The three-dimensional values of work and their relationship**

**Economic reasons:** Participant 11 said: ‘I made a decision to stay out of the benefit system about two years ago so as to be able to afford my own living expenses and not to depend on support from the public.’ In another unplanned interview with Lady Rita, who was a guest speaker at the London CIH Career Workshop organised for students in June 2010, she explained the reason for her decision to come out of the benefit system to meet her daily living expenses. For example, she said:

I went through 15 years of experience of relying on government for my daily living and this started as a teenager. It was a bad experience, as I found it difficult to meet basic living expenses from the weekly income support; it was like living a hard life, and ghetto is the right word to describe such a type of lifestyle.

The above two people had made a decision to work with the purpose of sustaining their lifestyles. Both demonstrate that it is possible to maintain and achieve ordinary living by trading their skills and time for wages.

**Social reasons:** Participant 11 also said that he has been able to go out and meet new people from work. He also said that he can afford a social life through his paid job. In the past, he said it was difficult for him to go out to town, as he had wanted, due to lack of money. The participant said that earning is not the only means to a social life, but now he had learned to make the best of his salary to maintain himself socially. From this statement, it can be argued that engaging in paid work will enable participants to have a choice of living and their desirable environment, which may include community and organisation. The opportunity derives from economic engagement (in the form of income from work), which enables individuals to choose a desirable lifestyle, with social status confirming the relationship between social networks and work (see Chapter 7 for the explicit connection between social capital and employment or human capital).

Social status also entails social interaction among people from work and outside their work environment. However, it is also possible to expand the social networks to people with weak ties through bridging social capital, but with the clear expectation that they will engage in meaningful activities such as employment, education and social and health support services. This is a crucial argument made by Granovetter (1985) and for the proponents of social capital, in which strong ties support weak ties.

**Psychological reasons:** Lady Rita mentioned that coming off state benefits and engaging in a day job had boosted her confidence and self-esteem. She said:

Staying on welfare benefits from youth to my mid-thirties offered me nothing but a hard life. I felt that the world was against me, worrying all the time and all this did

not help my thinking — poor health to say the worst. But now, I have got my life together — not thinking about the world against and socially isolated as a result of my paid job with a Local Authority as a Regeneration Officer.

I have benefitted from this job in terms of helping me to finance my education from an undergraduate housing course to a postgraduate course on regeneration programmes.

In this case, work contributes to high esteem and a person's sense of value. Work may contribute to personal fulfilment, thus it plays a significant role in people's lives.

Going back to Figure 6.2, it can be emphasised that the economic, social and psychological dimensions of the value of work are linked with one another. Economics is the link that binds together the psychological dimension and social reason.

Heller (1996), Ostrom (2000) and Rose (2002) all point out that social capital contributes to economic growth by facilitating collaboration between individual interests towards the achievement of increased output.

People engaging with work may have a choice of a career plan that entails how they want to progress in their career once they are ready to engage in the labour market. The plan must have a direction from the basic level, or from the placement or training programme. Those people will also need to review their objectives to monitor how well they are progressing with their career journey or to identify obstacles or risks that need to be addressed through support along the way. The objectives in the career plan must clearly state the curriculum or what would enable someone to reach their high potential. The career plan must identify the resources required in terms of skills, knowledge, training, shadow work, and the people that will mentor or support them.

***Strengthening the capacity of young people to engage in the labour market***

The research findings below will highlight the reasons for the unemployment of young homeless people in Rise and Happyside County.

This aspect of the research report will conclude by highlighting how to strengthen the capacity of the young people to compete for a job. The 2001 UK Census confirmed that 35.8 per cent of residents aged 16–74 in Rise and Happyside County were employed full-time, 11.6 per cent part-time, 5.8 per cent were self-employed, and 6.2 per cent were unemployed, while 1.5 per cent were students with jobs, 3.4 per cent were students without jobs, 11.9 per cent were retired, 10.6 per cent were looking after home or family, 8.5 per cent were permanently sick or disabled, and 4.8 per cent were economically inactive for other reasons. The unemployment rate of 6.2 per cent in Happyside County was high compared to the national rate of 3.4 per cent.

It has been derived from the findings that 4 young people out of 17 young people interviewed at the supported housing are not ready to go out for work due to their low esteem. We also have a 9 out of 17 young people interviewed stating how they had experienced difficulties in accessing jobs in Rise and Happyside County due to the reputation of the previous tenants of Supported Housing Ltd. As established above, not involving young people in meaningful daily activities or employment could result in idleness. Young people could end up engaging in criminal activities of all varieties.

Involving the young people more with work will reduce crime. It will also raise their self-esteem to a higher level, as well as improve their confidence and social participation in the community. It will help them with the recognition of their identity through the reconstruction of their social status. Yankelovich, through his research work on youth employment in South Africa, described work as having both social and economic

functions. He also linked the engagement of youths in the labour market as having benefit to the state (Yankelovich, 1982). He explained the benefits of work:

- People work only because they would not otherwise have the resources to sustain themselves;
- Work is a straight economic transaction in which people relate effort to financial return; and
- Work carries a moral imperative to do one's best, apart from practical, necessary or financial remuneration.

Therefore, this report will recommend the use of social capital to prepare young people for employment. From the research findings, the young people from the Moonday project will need confidence and skills building, career plans, and education, including social learning. The preparation for employment needs can be met through the input of the following:

- Support workers to offer basic skills for the young people by providing them with confidence building at the beginning of their tenancy at the Moonday project, for at least three to six months. Many young people coming to the project will need time to settle down and deal with their past experiences. Confidence building could be explored as a first step to moving residents forward from their past and then introducing them to the goals set around economic status in their support plan.
- Support workers from the Moonday project to work with the young people through their support plan to look at suitable options for each individual. The selected option in terms of building the future career of the young person must be a realistic, meaningful engagement in the support plan (under the employment training chapter). The realistic option for some of the young people could be going to college for formal education that will lead to their career objectives. Fukuyama emphasises the benefit of education in relation to a fulfilling lifestyle through social capital; thus, 'the area where government have the greatest direct ability to generate social capital is education'. There is widespread agreement that education increases

social capital. Education is now regarded as a key determinant of social capital by the following authors who clarified the relationship between social capital and education in the literature: Putnam (1995) in his work *Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital*, Helliwell and Putnam (1999) in their work on education and social capital, Alesina and La Ferrara (2000), Glaeser et al. (2002) on measuring trust, and Rupasingha et al. (2006) in *The Production of Social Capital in US Counties*.

Support workers and managers should continue to work with external agencies such as:

- Rise and Happyside County Adolescent Resources Centre, on the employment and education programme of the young person;
- Jobcentre, for work placement, career and training support;
- Brainfield College, for special education skills in social learning;
- Connexions, for skills and career direction;
- To the development partnership working arrangement with Sunnyside Town Council, and then businesses with regard to promoting employment opportunities/work placements for young people; and
- Rebuilding of the damaged reputation of the supported housing project caused by previous tenants. Supported Housing Ltd should organise an open day event and invite businesses, agencies and selected people in the community. Linking social capital can be useful in terms of young people and support workers networking with each other and developing trust over time. Generally, young people receive support from support workers within agreed targets and objectives that entail skills for employment opportunities, community engagement and access to health and welfare services. As Woolcock points out:

Linking social capital, which reaches out to unlikely people in dissimilar situations such as those who are entirely outside of the community, thus enables members to leverage a far wider range of resources than are available in the community (Woolcock, 2001: 13–14).

## **7.4 Social Capital and Creating Acceptable Communities for Young People**

Part of this chapter will explore the types of social capital in supported housing under the parameters of how effectively networking may contribute to the well-being of the individual and benefit both organisations and the community. Leading from social capital is the manner in which young people are being excluded from the community and how the problems that are confronting them can be resolved through dialogue and their involvement in local activities and initiatives or partnership work.

### ***7.4.1 The Types of Social Capital in Supported Housing***

This study sought to explore the kinds of social capital at both the individual and collective levels. This section is also designed to explore the impact of homelessness and relationships on social capital formation or depletion. Other forms of social capital — bonding and bridging — were identified through the interview data.

#### ***Bonding social capital***

We start by analysing the connection of the young people through the outcome of the interview carried out at the Moonday project:

- The majority of the young homeless people interviewed at the Supported Housing Moonday project said that they were still holding onto their old friends and were not making new connections;
- Few of the young people said that they had been able to make connections with new friends;
- It should be noted that only half of the people interviewed said that they were able to connect to their parents, while the other half said that they are not ready to reconnect with their parents due to placement orders.

The young people had contact nearly every day with their friends. During the interviews, young people said that their friends supported them when they were homeless in different ways, such as support with food and passing information to them about the Foyer. The dominant theme in this regard is that some of the vulnerable young people recognise that they can turn to their friends for support and realise that they gave them support when it was needed.

Typical comments included the following:

Yes, but they (friends) are not homeless; they helped me out with food and by coming around the tent to smoke and drink.

Participant 1, who made the above comment, said that he had known most of his friends for 13 years and that such long relationships contributed to the support he had received from his friends when it was needed, but in a different way. Some of them gave him social support by coming around to smoke and drink (the type of smoking and drinking activities were not specified). Some friends helped the above interview participant with food, as well as emotional support. During the interview with this participant, there was a strong sense of emotional support generated by friends being concerned for his safety and welfare, so they provided him with the details of the Moonday project.

Again, there are some networks of people that could possibly produce a negative outcome in some form of social capital bonding in the context of empirical economic engagement. The staff members of the Moonday project highlighted from their experience of working with youths that the accounts of criminal activities stemmed from their socialisation with the group or membership of people who are unemployed but spend time together to engage in alcohol and drug consumption. This type of engagement shows that social capital should be treated as a 'neutral' phenomenon, in that it can be positive, but



also quite negative in outcome. Furthermore, Participant 1 mentioned the group of friends coming around to smoke and drink. These friends were not in employment and cannot be seen as discussing employment issues that will contribute to the well-being of the above participant. Janlert and Hammerström (1988) concluded in their study of unemployed youths that there was indeed a ‘correlation’ between unemployment and alcohol consumption in unemployed youths.

In this study — as was obvious in Section 8.3 — many young people from supported housing in the Moonday project were not in employment because of the previous criminal activities of previous tenants. Therefore, this research established a connection between unemployment, crime and homelessness. The bonding of the above group can be perceived as not being healthy enough for any group of young or homeless people. The materialistic attitudes and the acquisitive desires of the homeless network group (where the main interest is to engage in drugs, alcohol, criminal activities, and an unwillingness to work) cannot produce useful benefits to society, with the group continuing to be a closed loop.

### ***Family relationships in the context of bonding social capital***

Most of the young people were disconnected from their family due to various reasons identified in Section 8.1. Over time, young people develop relationships with their family, and nine young people interviewed are now reconnected with their family. In this case, the family, especially mothers, have shown interest in the situation of their children and some assist them shopping or providing them with transport. In some cases, parents invite their children to the family house for meals, weekend visits and social gatherings, Christmas, and so on. These are the accounts of what the participants said about their relationship with their parents:

- Participant 4 said that he has been making regular visits to the family, he sleeps, shares problems with them, and eats with them — they are a very caring family.
- Participant 5 has talked to her dad occasionally. There was no connection with the rest of the family members, which was a result of her parents leaving the Turnaround project three years ago. The participant in question did not have contact details for the family members.
- Participant 7 managed to establish a relationship with her mum but was unable to rebuild a relationship with her father.
- Participant 8 said that he had been receiving support from his family.
- Five other participants said that they have been reconnected to their families.

Once again, the above account confirmed that support from the family is common to 53 per cent of the young people who have reconnected to their family. The family's emotional support and caring attitude show that they are there for them, with this element being required in bonding social capital. Reconnection to the family through social capital is very useful to the life of anyone (whether a vulnerable person or not), as it can contribute to that person's health. Interactions provide the opportunity for families to maintain relationships, enhance well-being, as well as learn, practise and demonstrate new behaviours and patterns of interaction.

One of the young homeless people interviewed said that his girlfriend's family supported him through his crisis period, particularly when sleeping rough on the street. Generally, young people received support through a family member of their friend.

### ***Bridging social capital***

The social capital type comprises people who have limited networks of family and friends, but who are involved in civic and community life. Putnam (2000) described bridging social capital as the type of networks that encompass more distant ties of similar persons, such as

loose friendships, workmates and connections to services. Connections to services through bridging social capital are relevant to the type of social capital that can be located in supported housing through:

1. Networks between residents and external agencies. For example, the staff of Supported Housing confirmed that part of the service provision for younger people is connecting them back to the community through engagement with employment. To this end, staff have facilitated networking between residents and employment training organisations like Connexions.
2. Distant ties between residents and other young people from other social backgrounds. For example:
  - Participant 12, who said that he had met a new friend at Town Centre Football Ground (anonymised name of football ground). This friend was not homeless, but has always supported him with useful information about services.
  - Participant 11 said that a closer friend introduced him to another friend, who eventually connected him to his current work.
  - Participant 9 said that he has been networking with a friend who will soon join his current employer as a site manager. He said that he informed his friend about this role.

The above cases highlight how bridging social capital operates within both distant and strong ties of people, to maximise support and linkage to external services. They also show that **who** you know can lead to quicker success or accomplishment than **what** you know.

#### ***7.4.2 Key Findings and Issues during the Interview on an Acceptable Community for the Young People***

The views of the young people from the analysis in Table 8.1 indicate the following:

- Ten residents out of 17 said that the community did not accept them as soon as they mentioned that they were homeless or living in homeless accommodation;

- Another 41 per cent of the residents said that they make themselves feel acceptable by the community by not telling anybody about their homelessness. Most of them said that it was their business, and nothing to do with anyone else; and
- The remaining 8 per cent of the young people said that coming from foster care meant that they did not feel the same as other people with histories of sleeping rough.

The views of the staff from the analysis sheet in Table 7.1 are as follows:

- Staff said that only social businesses accepted the young people onto their services; and
- Private businesses are not ready to accept young people because of their homelessness and the behaviour of young people in the area.

### ***Position of young homeless people with community-based services***

The research findings identified key issues around certain groups of employers who did not accept young people as an integral part of the community because of their homelessness.

The combined outcome of the investigation with the staff and young people (as described above) suggested that the community, made up of businesses and the older generation, did not accept young people because of their homelessness. The stigma attached to young homeless people is based on the criminal activities of past tenants and had led to the exclusion of young people from supermarket jobs, as described earlier in this project report.

The current tenants of supported housing (at the time of the research enquiry) were being stigmatised and labelled for offences they did not commit. This is an issue of ‘reputation’ and ‘image’. Businesses had imposed economic sanctions on young people, which is an obvious exclusion that could generate psycho-social and economic disadvantages for young people in Rise and Happyside County.

The young people also said that not only businesses that excluded them from the community but the older generation, which distanced themselves from young homeless people by not listening to them. Participant 7 said: 'Young people have been screaming at older people to do something for them. But the older people and local government officials are not listening to the needs of the young people or responding to their voice.' The context specific in this type of exclusion is called youth exclusion. A comparative analysis paper on youth from Silver referred to youth exclusion as a form of social exclusion in which youth are situated at a social disadvantage in joining institutions or organisations in their societies (Silver, 2007: 5).

It should be noted that the costs of depriving young people from employment opportunities and social engagements could lead to a decline in growth, an increase in crime and poor health.

The increase in crime emerges as a result of groups of young people not having much to do in their daily activities or meaningful engagement and a lack of finance to sustain their daily living. A female member of staff, based upon her experience of working in supported housing, confirmed: insufficient social amenities make young people idle and engage in criminal activities. Rushforth and Flannery argued that unlawful activities of youths can be traced to the context of their social positions of disadvantage and relative deprivation, such as the effects of poverty, poor education and unemployment (Rushforth & Flannery, 1999).

Again, it should be noted that Rise and Happyside County is a small 'island' with little disposition towards social amenities for young people. Those young people want to improve their well-being by going to the gym or leisure centre and participating in social activities. From the interview enquiries with the young people, it was discovered that not

many leisure activities and social events are available to the young in Rise and Happyside County. The first member of staff in interviews confirmed this and said: 'Generally, not much is available for the young people. Some of them are too old to take part in the youth club.'

Their personal income is usually not enough to finance attendance at leisure centres and social events, even at reduced prices. As a member of staff put it:

Young people cannot attend social groups due to their financial circumstances. The flyer for a dance event stated the admission fees of £5.00, and young people cannot afford such an amount.

The circumstances of young people are strong evidence of weak social capital or, perhaps, a weak network of resources in which information cannot be circulated to young people or other groups of vulnerable homeless people due to the rupture of social exclusion detaching them from participating fully in the normal activities of the society in which they live. In other words, vulnerable people become less privileged in the community due to weak social capital. Weak social capital exists where vulnerable people are disengaged from networks that could support them to participate fully in the social, economic and political activities of their society. Vulnerable people are often, by definition, not engaged in support networks. Or they could be in networks that have plenty of 'negative' social capital, for instance, groups of street dwellers, where networks might provide support and identity, but at the cost of limits to resources and knowledge.

Weak social networks are embedded when vulnerable people hang onto groups of people with the same type of circumstances and economic and social status. Some of the young people said that their friends are living with their parents and that they went to lodge with them during the period when they were sleeping rough. It is obvious that this type of

network cannot produce strong social capital, as the vulnerable person is relying on a friend who is being supported financially by their parents. Indeed, friends who rely on their parents for a living cannot add to the economic status of the vulnerable person.

#### ***7.4.3 What Can Be Done to Ensure that the Voice of Young People is Represented in the Community?***

In Section 7.1 of the research enquiry, frontline staff and managers stated that young people were not accepted in the neighbourhood. For example, in Table 7.1, staff said that young people were not accepted in the community due to the behaviour of the former tenants of Moonday Supported Housing. Staff said further that some neighbours wrote a letter to the local MP to complain about the behaviour of young people in supported housing. Based on the above, the views of staff were gathered and they made some key suggestions on how to ensure that the voices of young people are represented in the community, as follows:

- A community should be ready to listen to young people (not to judge them all the time) to give them the opportunity to express their views, with the community understanding young people and supporting them with their problems;
- Discounted fees should be made available for young people to attend the gym;
- To engage young people to take part in local activities;
- To include young people in local initiatives.

The views of young people were gathered as:

- A community should provide a place for young people to go, as this will keep them out of trouble;
- A community should provide leisure centre membership cards at a discounted rate; and

- Young people should be provided with a dancing class facility and other social events to keep them out of trouble.

In order to improve the voice of the young people in the community, a meeting was arranged with the Senior Housing Officer from the Regeneration Team at Sunnyside Borough Council in April 2010, with an agreement being reached for the Local Authority to take the above view from the staff and young people forward, thereby supporting how the voice of the young people can be represented in the community by including them in the consultation on borough-wide initiatives. The Local Authority agreed to invest money and time in consulting young people in the project on the local initiatives by inviting them or their representative to the forums. In this case, residents will be asked to appoint their representative, who will be attending the forums on their behalf. The Senior Housing Officer also said that the representative will be able to access free training opportunities on leadership through the Local Authority and from the Voluntary Action Group. Appendix 3 of this project report confirmed the above arrangement, with a further update also being provided in Appendix 7 as Post-Research Data. The above arrangement was also covered in the project outcome in Chapter 8, as well as on the impact of the outcome in Chapter 9 of this project report.

### ***Responsibilities, trust and hope of young people***

Young people also have a responsibility to create an acceptable community. One of the responsibilities is to work with trust with their key workers and external agencies. They have to take a risk in working with new contacts or people in network groups with faith that they will do what they have promised in fulfilment of their obligations. As Nahapiet and Ghoshal point out:

Trust indicates a willingness to be vulnerable to another party, either as a consequence of a belief in a partner's good intent, belief in their competence and



capability, belief in their reliability, or belief in their perceived openness. (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998: 242–266)

Generally, there are three levels of trust and they are interconnected in terms of responsibility, obligation and behaviour. These levels or types of trust, already mentioned in Chapter 7 of this project report paper, are summarised below.

**Individual level:** This is where an individual trusts another person or group to do something for them, using what they know about their disposition, ability and reputation as evidence that they will fulfil their obligation. This is the role of support workers to their service users, as they are responsible for facilitating connection between service users and key external agencies.

**Collective level:** If there is no trust for the agency to fulfil its obligation, surely it will be difficult for it to accomplish anything. This is where the vulnerable person should take responsibility for themselves and engage with the service in order for them to achieve a positive outcome. Service users in supported housing are motivated to engage with the services from external agencies as part of their independent living skills through their support plan. Independent living skills are linked to the re-housing of service users from temporary accommodation to a permanent self-contained property. As Dasgupta put it, if a person does not trust an agency or organisation with which they were affiliated with as an individual, it will be difficult for such an individual and the agency to fulfil an agreement (Dasgupta, 1988).

**Background, culture, social system, and character rebuilding:** These factors determine how people trust another person or the agency. In supported housing, there is a social system that clarifies the service the young people will receive and the specialist agencies that will be involved with their support through interconnection. However, the frontline

support workers should continue to support building confidence in the service users through a clear, objective and descriptive measurement of progression in association with the outcome star chart and any other identifiable measuring tools as a reward.

Young homeless people just need to start their journey of trust from the beginning of their tenancy or support contract at the Moonday project, thereby working through their own self-esteem and developing confidence. They have to take time within their support programme to deal with past issues that overshadow their confidence and growth from the perspective of their social and economic well-being.

Transitional changes from low to high esteem could occur through individuals putting their past experience behind them. This will open up their confidence and generate the trust of working with other people to fulfil their expectations. Participant 05 from the Supported Housing Turnaround Project is working as an aeronautical engineer; he said that he was able to rise to the occasion by putting his past experience behind him to face future challenges through confidence building, developing good behaviour and talking to people who will help him with expectations. This type of behaviour and confidence building is worth other young people emulating through the support of their support workers.

Participant 05 learned from his past experiences, and aims for a better future by repositioning himself and getting support from people or groups such as specialist employment support service workers (from the local employment project), the Job Centre, college and his church.

Repositioning entails a change in behaviour or the development of a social character that embraces good conduct and standard behaviour. Participant 05 said that 'changing from past behaviour opened up a new person in [him], and since then [he has] been living a new lifestyle free of crime'. He said that it was crime he had committed in

the past that led to his homelessness. The newness and social character were both developed through support from other people. He said his hope for the future was made manifest from the account of his behaviour and by receiving support based on clear objectives including expectations for social and economic growth.

It can be deduced from the account of Participant 05 that hope is the substance of expectations for the future that can be made manifest with action and support from network groups in the community.

The above account also established the core values of social capital as trust, hope or expectation. Another aspect established from the outcome of the economic and social well-being of Participant 05 was the knowledge of support received or to be received from the network groups or social integration. The changes in the behaviour of Participant 05 responded to the aim of this research in terms of rebuilding of character, with the positive outcome of such changes being able to make a significant improvement to life.

There is also an issue of social character that needs to change if young vulnerable homeless people are to remove the negative stigma imposed on them by the community. The character of young people with alcohol and drug dependency needs to be addressed in order for them to engage with the wider community. They will need to work with their workers and engage with external agencies such as the local and Community Alcohol Service, which are contracted to provide block sessions of counselling and support to young people with dependencies. The effects of alcohol and drugs on young people could lead to anti-social behaviour. The behaviour of the young people in the past was triggered by alcohol and drugs, which is what led to the exclusion of young people from the labour market in Rise and Happyside County.

### ***Faith***

Two young people interviewed said that faith has worked for them. One said that they strongly believed that faith makes a significant contribution to their well-being. From the earliest interviews conducted with the residents of the Supported Housing Ltd Turnaround Project, Participant 05 said that he was able to achieve his dream of being an aeronautical engineer through faith and hope. However, 15 young people said that they did not have faith in anything and that their self-confidence is enough for them to enhance their quality of life.

Increasing social capital is required in supported housing because it can be recalled that networks of friends and family connections can add to the well-being of young people. This chapter has outlined how young people can be linked to the main community through the bridging type of social capital and established how young people can become active in the community as part of their civic engagement.

## **Chapter 8      Outcomes**

This chapter expands on the arch findings in Chapter 7 (as listed below) and provides solutions that respond to the problems faced by young homeless people living in supported housing. In short, the information collated from the research enquiries was analysed in the order of causes and effects of the homelessness, engagement of young people in the community, and their social and economic engagement. The structure of the analysis enabled a thorough examination of the findings that eventually led to the development of a programme or solutions to maximise social capital for young people in supported housing.

The background information on homelessness as well as the literature review on social capital from the perspectives of theory, policy and professional context enabled the development of a solution to for address the effect of homelessness on young people, from psychological reactions to socio-economical disengagement on community-based services, as identified in Chapter 7. The experiential information gathered from young people and staff in the research made a significant contribution to the development or building of a solution to the findings.

The application of knowledge from professionals is identified as part of the solution to the problems young people are facing in the community as a result of their homelessness. This will outline how support workers and agencies should improve working relationships through the sharing of knowledge, which would enable the maximisation of social capital in supported housing. The application of knowledge in the context of this research outcome is the same mentioned in Sections 4.1 and 4.11. For example, Section 4.1 of this research raised the question that follows:

How might knowledge be developed by practitioners in helping homeless people to create new contacts through health, employment and social engagement in the community?

This chapter will respond to the above question by showing how professional agencies and support workers will use the direct experience of working with a particular person as well as professional knowledge from the policy context and theoretical information around mental health, alcohol, drugs, and social conditions to find a solution to their problems. The solution will be incorporated into the support plan model recognised as a document for prioritising individual objectives/aspirations. The document will show clear areas of responsibilities of agencies involved with the support of the vulnerable person in terms of empowering independent living skills and health improvement that will lead to well-being.

Section 4.11, under the application of knowledge, refers to the knowledge that we develop in our everyday lives, which can be useful for finding one's way around, knowing who to ask or how to solve typical problems. It is essentially a fundamental human resource without which institutions and societies would be impossible. Alfred Schutz, the existential phenomenologist, refers to the knowledge we develop for our everyday lives as 'recipe knowledge' (Schutz, 1964: 120–134). Therefore, the findings in Chapter 7 of this project report can be listed as follows:

- Effect of homelessness on the health of young people due to breakdown of relationships, family structure, job loss, sexual orientation, and mental health problems.
- Young people being denied access to jobs due to the past behaviour of previous tenants. The findings in Chapter 7 captured what young people and their workers said about how the employers had denied young homeless people access to employment for using the address of the project.

- It was also discovered through the enquiry in Chapter 7 that some young homeless people deliberately ignored the prospect of securing a paid job due to the welfare benefits trap and low self-esteem created as a result of their homelessness.
- Young people did not see how education and training can make a significant contribution to skills development and an opportunity for them to compete in the labour market in future.
- The disintegration of young people from the mainstream community in terms of providing them with the resources that will support them in accessing leisure activities as well as encouraging them to take part with the local consultation and development of their community.
- Some young people retained connection with their family, while some cannot easily amend the breakdown of their relationship.

As a result of the above findings, this project developed solutions to the problems of young homeless people in supported housing or the homeless project. The solutions provided by this project indeed responded to the questions raised in the introduction chapter of this paper in terms of the aims of this project:

- How far, if at all, can social capital resolve the effect of homelessness on the health of young homeless people?
- Does the impact of anti-social behaviour affect the relationship between homeless people and the wider community?
- To what extent can social capital, in close relationship with human capital, improve the socio-economic well-being of vulnerable homeless people through networks of support agencies such as Brainfield College, Connexions and Sunnyside Town Council?
- Can social capital in supported housing give young people a voice through consultation on local initiatives, partnership work and community dialogue?

In short, a solution was developed to confirm that social capital can be maximised for young homeless people in supported housing through an effective support model and partnership work with specialist agencies to engage young people in education and employment. The solution included involvement of young people in new initiatives in the community through consultation. Also, for the Turnaround project to work with local authorities, resources should be provided that enable young people to engage in leisure activities.

***Solution on the effect of the homelessness on health of the young people through social capital***

The findings in Chapter 7 of this project confirmed how the health of young homeless people was being significantly affected as a result of sleeping rough. The research findings in Chapter 8 confirmed how the mental health of the homeless also deteriorated as a result of homelessness that led to loss of confidence, trust and disconnection from the wider community. Thus, this project recommended how social capital can be maximised to improve the well-being of young people following the effects of homelessness on their health.

The discussion will emerge from the perspective of how the physical and emotional well-being of a young or vulnerable person can be sustained in the areas of health by engaging with networks of support agencies and communication with a trusted person or group of people who are not professionals.

Therefore, the first aspect to discuss is using the network of support agencies to achieve a sustained well-being of the homelessness of young persons in the areas of health being affected by their previous experience or the damage caused by homelessness.



In this case, different types of models of a network of support agencies, available to young homeless people and other vulnerable homeless people in supported housing, can be discussed as follows.

**Structured support network model:** This type of support network model comprises agencies that may include housing support professionals of any grade as well as health specialists consisting of a psychiatrist, community practice nurse and care coordinator. This is a simple support network model that entails the combination of two or more professionals from different backgrounds to support a vulnerable person in achieving their goals and aspirations on issues relevant to their health. As discussed in Section 3.3, the benefit of a group of people made up of professionals, friends and family coming together to support the well-being of vulnerable people could be significant, as everyone who is weak depends on other people to support them. Five benefits of social networks on the health of vulnerable people, clarified through the work of Berkman (1979), are highlighted in Chapter 3 and can be summarised as social support, social influence, social engagement, person-to-person contact, and access to resources and material goods.

These pathways identified as benefits of social networks will transform the life of a vulnerable person through a structural support from agencies. Figure 8 (below) shows the way in which people who need help go into support service providers to receive help concerning their problems and independent living skills.

Without going into the clinical and complex nature of this model of support networks, we may say that the agencies will engage young or vulnerable homeless people within a commonly acceptable framework that will translate the objectives or the goals into action. The health specialists refer to the framework for specifying goals and managing associated risks for vulnerable people as a ‘care plan’, while the housing support staff

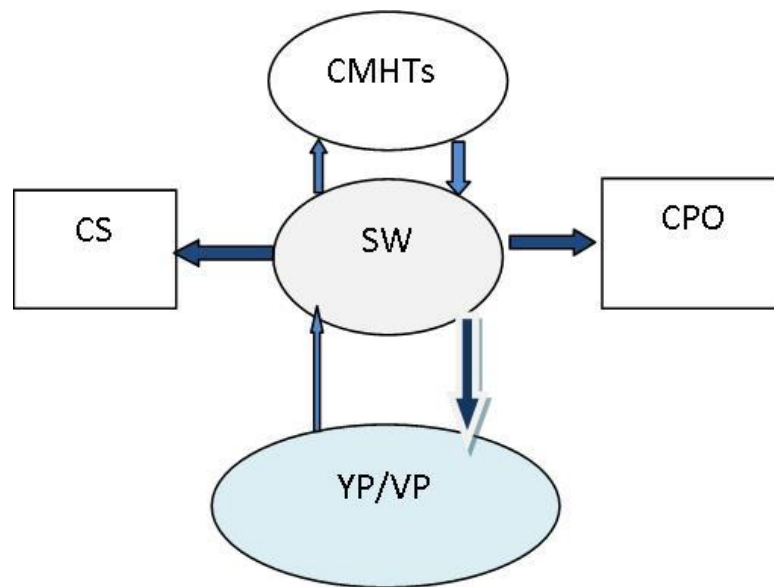
named their framework tool a ‘person-centred support plan’. However, all actions must clearly reflect the need of the young person, what they want to do with their current condition and how they want to progress their journey to independence.

In terms of supporting the goals of the vulnerable persons in relation to their health, each of the agencies must feed the agreed action from the joint meeting between the professionals and the vulnerable person into their framework. Each party must have clear tasks to follow up within stated deadlines.

All parties are to fulfil the areas of tasks allocated to them within clearly defined deadlines. However, a lack of clarity of roles may prevent the set objectives being achieved.

The support staff plays a dual role when it comes to supporting vulnerable persons, as they spend more time with them than with their other external colleagues. Therefore, the role of support workers within the community of practice should be:

- To act as the vector of support to vulnerable young homeless people until they reach a level when such direction is no longer required (see Figure 8.1 below);
- To maintain an empowerment role in terms of equipping them with the living skills required to achieve tasks identified through their agreed care or support plan; and
- To link or facilitate external support services such as alcohol and substance awareness programmes and re-housing applications for permanent housing following the provision of life skills programmes and others.



**Figure 8.1 Links between community workers and clients**

Figure 8.1 shows the link between CMHTs and other health professionals, and Housing Support Workers (SWs) and young people including other vulnerable homeless people (YP/VP). CS stands for Community-based Services, and the arrows between SW and YP/VP illustrate how Housing Support Workers are empowering young people with the necessary living skills to access the community services. CPO stands for care plan objectives set by community mental health for young people or any vulnerable person to achieve within the care plan programme.

Apart from clarity of roles between the network of support agencies, communication and precision are the two key benefits that make this type of network of support agency important to the professionals who use and exchange information about the person they are working together to support. A structured liaison meeting is the medium through which interagency groups from different backgrounds and with different levels of experience communicate. Precision means that the group should operate within clear

boundaries or terms of reference that will enable easy-to-follow, unambiguous recommendations.

The process tool for maintaining effective communication and precision should be embedded in:

- Regular structured meetings — such as a Care Plan Approach meeting for young homeless people on enhanced Care Programme of Approach (CPA) or on CMHTs' register — with frontline SW to be invited to attend (the progress review meeting) and to provide on the action plan they are working on with the young person.
- Interagency meetings should take place to give updates of general issues with the young person as part of best practice.
- A yearly review of terms of reference and information-sharing protocols should exist between all the agencies connected to any other supported housing working with the homeless people.

In effect, the network of support agencies should work as a community of practice to ensure quality, effective networking among professionals and the sharing of knowledge.

The authors of the community of practice describe it as:

A set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice. (Lave & Wenger, 1991: 98)

Lave and Wenger were simply talking about a sort of learning in which newcomers engage in situated learning that cannot be separated from the community of practice without the full legitimate participation of older members of the community. Without drifting away from the focus of this chapter, the work of Lave and Wenger can be used to shape how support agencies with common interests, beliefs and notions of trust should come together to solve the social, physical and emotional problems of young people in the community

through the sharing of information and knowledge from the perspective of different experiences and specialisms.

Specialist agency workers and housing support staff should work together to find solutions to the problems of vulnerable homeless people through learning in a legitimate peripheral participation. As Lave and Wenger have shown, learning and working through participation in groups and engagement with the 'daily round' can make the outcome of the interagency work informative and of interest. The characteristics of communities of practice vary. Some have names, but many do not. Some communities of practice are quite formal in organisations; others are very fluid and informal. However, Wenger stated:

Members are brought together by joining in common activities and by what they have learned through their mutual engagement in these activities (Wenger, 1998: 73)

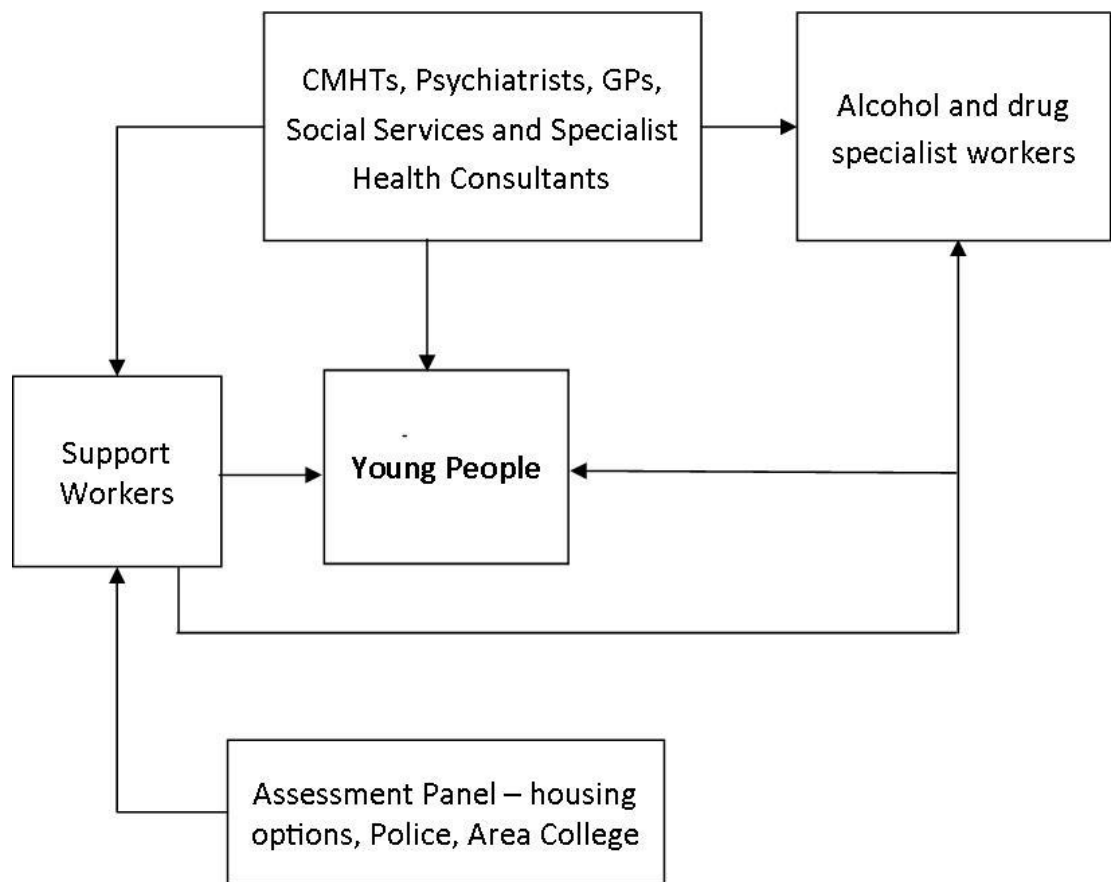
It can be emphasised further that mutuality is a key aspect of engagement in any interagency or social partnership work that exists between staff from the supported housing sector and external colleagues from either social services, CMHT (both on the level of care coordinator) and NHS staff such as community practice nurses (from a social care perspective), a drug and alcohol project and localised services that include a local education and employment project. The concept of mutuality is, of course, crucial to social capital: that is, it relates to reciprocity. Wenger explains that practice exists because people engage in actions, the meanings of which they have to negotiate with each other. Therefore, he states that practice is not to be found in books or tools, although it may involve many kinds of artefacts Practice is to be found in a community 'and the relations of mutual engagement by which they can do whatever they do' (Wenger, 1998: 73).

The work of Lave and Wenger was introduced here to establish that the support agency workers and support workers of Supported Housing Ltd should maintain effective networking. This should be undertaken through common ground to generate good practice, flow of language, common interest, relationships, and group dynamism in relation to the sharing of new knowledge from participants in support of the well-being of young people.

It should be noted that old ideas and static knowledge cannot be used to resolve the well-being of vulnerable young homeless people, as the practitioners need to act to incorporate a new policy agenda, a change of environment and changes to the need of the vulnerable people. This is what Star (1995) referred to as dynamism in relation to the social distribution of the knowledge in the group. Star points out:

Star said further that, ‘obviously there will be members of the group in the same community who have specialised knowledge in certain aspects, that is, they are “gurus”’ (Star, 1995: 35)

This is much related to bridging social capital, where members of the group or associations of people with a common interest will be able to consult others for help, but, as time passes, the social distribution of the knowledge will shift.



**Figure 8.2 Young people in the centre of professional agencies**

Figure 8.2 presents a diagram of the relationships between key support workers facilitating services to the young people through working with health professionals (such as CMHTs, psychiatrists, medical consultants, and social services), alcohol and drug agencies, housing assessment panels (such as Borough Housing Options), the police and the local college. The essence of joint working between support workers and the external agencies listed in Figure 8.2 above is to maximise housing support-related services. The diagram shows how professionals can work together in a network of support to deliver quality services to homeless people.

This chapter has established the problem of homeless people and shown that increasing social capital will play a major role in enhancing their health and well-being. Figure 8.2 shows how vulnerable homeless people in a supported housing environment are receiving support from their support worker and network of support agencies.

Putnam established one of the advantages of social capital as ‘features of social life – networks, norms, and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives (Putnam, 1995: 664–665). He identified ‘participants’ instead of ‘society’ as the beneficiaries of social capital. The two key points from Putnam on social capital and relationships in the community referred to associational life and dialogue.

These can be analysed as follows:

Associational life relates to the act of joining and being regularly involved in organised groups, which has a very significant impact on individual health and well-being.

***Actions to take forward as recommendations include:***

- Support workers should continue to have a mutual engagement with the network of support agencies and ensure that their action plan is reflected in the support plan of the young person they are working with;
- Support workers should also provide feedback to specialist workers such as care coordinators on the areas of the action plan on which they are coordinating with the young person;
- Key support workers should continue to take action from CPA meetings with community practice nurses or care coordinators and consultants, incorporating it into the support plan;
- Support workers should give feedback to care coordinators and community practice nurses at CPA review meetings for the purpose of knowledge sharing and updating how the young person is progressing with the support plan objectives;



- Support workers to hold case management meetings once a month to present a case report of their key service users to the entire staff group, thereby receiving feedback from internal colleagues as part of best practice;
- To review the support plan in such a way that young homeless people can understand the objectives and their implementation through outcome star measurement and the ladder of change; and
- To use the new support plan review as an opportunity to restructure the service model into health and social inclusion services. The new service model to embrace the key core elements of the service, such as health support, employment, training and education, tenancy management, community and capacity inclusion, and family/friend networks.

### ***Employment***

Employment is one of the key exclusion issues identified in this research, and a proposal was made to Sunnyside Town Council to work with the Moonday project to reduce the skills deficit and the difficulties young people face in competing for job opportunities with others in the community. To this end, an agreement was made with Sunnyside Town Council to improve the image of young people through work placement opportunities. The forward plan is that:

- Sunnyside Town Council will invest resources into the economic engagement of young people through work placements;
- Sunnyside Town Council will take a lead through a joint working approach with the Moonday project to promote the work placements and employment opportunities project available for young people to local businesses in the borough. Sunnyside Town Council will use the outcome of the in-house work placement programme provided to the young people to justify changes in their attitude towards work and the benefit to the businesses as well as to the community. Steger (2000) made it known that consumption is used partly for the development of human capital in terms of education and health, which increases the productivity of

labour and makes a positive contribution to output, which is revealed on the macroeconomic level.

The above arrangement is justifiable as an investment in young or homeless people and will improve their skills and increase their living capacity through earnings from work. This is why there is a focus on human capital connected to the economic behaviour of individuals, particularly on the way in which their accumulation of knowledge and skills enables them to increase their productivity and their earnings. In doing so, they increase the productivity and wealth of the societies in which they live. Therefore, it is reasonable to negotiate with policymakers, funders of social skills and employers that an investment in knowledge and skills can support individual participation in employment and add to collective economic returns. This can be done through formal and informal learning programmes.

The above arrangement with Sunnyside Town Council clearly identified the relationship between employability and social capital as employment skills, social skills, practice, and knowledge that can be gained through relationships within a network group. Thus, social capital focuses on networks: the relationships within and between them, and the norms which govern these relationships. However, it should be noted that this does not necessarily entail a specific value position on the part of those who use it as an analytic device due to its strong normative connotations, clarifying that trusting relationships are good for social cohesion and for economic success (Leadbeater, 1999). In this case, it can be argued that social capital must form a healthy and balanced relationship through the representation of strong and weak ties. Weak ties, without a mixture of stronger ties, cannot transform access of vulnerable or less privileged people to the benefits of their wider participation in society. At the same time, it can be argued that strong ties can also be dysfunctional, excluding information and reducing the capacity for innovation

(Granovetter, 1973). There can be negative normative associations as well as positive ones, such that some networks embody the ‘dark side’ of social capital, to the detriment of the wider society and even of its own members.

Apart from encouraging the local borough to support young people through job placements, a recommendation was made to staff to support tenants in engaging in the labour market through:

- Collaboration work with Job Centres around work placement schemes, training and employment workshops;
- Directing tenants to employment agencies for work placements with employers; and
- Fostering partnership work with voluntary organisations that can provide young people with placements for experience.

### ***Education***

The research findings established that 6 out of 17 people were not interested in going to college due to their health conditions and benefit claims. Therefore, part of the support service provision to young people should focus on empowering young people to undergo formal or informal learning at the local college. Getting young people into full-time or part-time college should be encouraged by the Moonday project, as some young people said that they are not interested in studies at the moment because they do not want their benefits to be affected. The Moonday project should continue to instil confidence in these young people that their benefits cannot be affected instantly. They need to encourage them that there will be no need for them to rely on state benefits once they are able to secure a well-paid job through enhancement of skills from their college or education programme. The support staff need to use support plans to encourage hard-to-engage young people to

engage in education. They need to reassure them that adequate educational attainment will add to their high level of civic engagement and a better perception of their local area.

The Brainfield College, as a provider of community education service, should work more closely with businesses or other homeless projects in the local community to find out the special interests of the individuals, which may be skills valuable to the employer market and that might make vulnerable people able to compete in that market. For example, some vulnerable young people with mental health problems might need a specialist education service in order to engage in the labour market. Having such opportunities made available to these young people might give them the confidence necessary to get involved in the labour market.

It should be noted that the educational process starts in school, producing informed individuals who promote social interactions and share social responsibilities. Educated individuals have a better understanding of the positive impacts on society of associational activities and collective action than those with less education (Rupasingha et al., 2006). It is widely believed that education generates significant positive externalities and improves overall productivity in the economy.

### ***Relationship between social capital, human capital and education***

Before concluding how social capital can improve the socio-economic well-being of vulnerable homeless people, this section will show the relationship between social capital, human capital and education.

The relationship between these three can be explored by examining what social capital, human capital and education should achieve in terms of outcomes to the individual, organisations, including society, and the learning market.

**Table 8.1      Distinctions between social capital and human capital**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Human Capital</b>	<b>Social Capital</b>	<b>Education</b>
Focus	Individual	Relationships	Market (formal and informal)
Measures	Length of learning and qualifications	Attitudes/values Membership/participation Trust levels	Knowledge and skills (mostly from informal learning arrangement)
Direct outcomes	Income, productivity	Social cohesion	Results and assessments of learning
Indirect outcome	Health, civic activity	Economic achievement More social capital	Participants and relationship with employers and community

The table describes the distinctions as follows:

**Focus:** The key distinction between human capital, social capital and education is that human capital focuses on individual, social capital on the relationship between human beings and the networks, and education on the learning market. In a classic economic context, the inclusion of social capital draws attention to the fact that individuals and their human capital are not discrete entities that exist separately from the rest of the organisation, or from other social units. Linked to this is how young people can be empowered to engage in the labour market through the acquisition and the development of skills to be achieved from the job placement — including educational support from the local college — will depend on the values and behaviour patterns of the contexts in which

these skills are expected to operate to the mutual benefit of the individuals, employers and community.

**Measures:** Human capital is measured primarily for individuals, by the level of qualifications achieved, while social capital is measured in terms of attitudes, values or by levels of active participation in civic life or in networks. The relevance of this to economic growth can be seen in a number of ways. Social capital can open up opportunities for people who, due to their circumstances (work, health or personal issues and family commitments), cannot afford formal learning to access informal modes of learning. For instance, homeless people need confidence to participate in formal learning, an opportunity to acquire skill through different types of participatory arrangements such as learning from work placement schemes, distance learning and training or specialist education schemes for people with learning disabilities. An example is the training programme specifically for those with mental health issues organised by Lewisham College in 2005. It can be argued that participatory learning through informal arrangements can therefore provide network membership with the accompanying opportunity to access information and ideas in an unstructured way. The joint working between the learning market in Rise and Happyside County, supported housing and other participants, to provide work placements for vulnerable young homeless people, may provide them with great opportunities to play a part in their surrounding environment or community. This is similar to the belief of Wenger (1998), who writes that learning transforms who we are and what we can do and is not merely an accumulation of skills and information.

**Outcomes:** The following can be outcomes of employment and training opportunities for vulnerable homeless people, through relationships between human capital, social capital and education or the learning market. The first outcome of human capital can be measured

by enhanced income or productivity. Social capital can be measured by the level of participants' social cohesion and, generally, how they contribute to economic performance. Social capital can therefore be linked directly to economic performance at different levels, such as at the national level (Fukuyama, 1995) or the regional level (Maskell et al., 1998). The contribution of education or the learning market is an outcome of learning through assessments and the impact of the training by acquiring competencies and becoming productive.

In conclusion, providing homeless people with opportunities to engage in the labour market requires basic skills of communication, team working, and confidence through social engagement with people from the workplace, plus punctuality and organisation. All these can be achieved through informal learning in work placements and support from learning centres. According to Levy and Murnane, communication and teamwork skills are two of the most globally acknowledged competences for a modern economy (Levy & Murnane, 1999). This was also echoed in the report produced by Joyce, 'Taking a Hard Look at Soft Skills' (Joyce, 2001), which highlighted various skills in the workplace such as 'generic skills, soft skills, behavioural skills, enterprise skills, key competencies, core skills, employability skills, and people skills'. Joyce stated further that all these types of skill were different names for the same thing. In view of the above discussion, it can be argued that employment training for young homeless people can make their lives turn around, should the programme be implemented as planned with Sunnyside Town Council in October 2010.

### ***Improving social participation***

A recommendation was made as a result of this project for Sunnyside Town Council to help within their financial resources to increase social amenities for young people in Rise and Happyside County. Young people, as highlighted above, said that they wanted more

leisure activities such as sports grounds, the opportunity for free dance classes and support with discounted gym memberships. Young people said that they cannot afford the current membership fees of £5.00, so the Borough Council gave their initial agreement to look into social amenities for young people, with a consultation forum being organised with the young people at the Moonday project to bring their interests on board. The young people said that the community had been taking their opinion and voices for granted.

All the young people said that they would like to be consulted on local agenda issues so that their views can be represented in decision making. Network skills provided by support workers will prepare them for this aspect of community integration. In effect, increasing social capital through network skills will give young homeless people the opportunity to be linked to the wider society or community. Generally, the Borough Council will accept this view and find a way of involving the young adults or representative from the project in the decision making and general discussions on local issues.

Inviting young homeless people (and other young people) to community consultations is a form of social capital where people from different groups or networks come together to engage in dialogue to find solutions to problems through their common objectives and shared vision. This can be guaranteed through the Council, which will work to invite young people to the forum to discuss local agendas or initiatives. In order for this to take place, Sunnyside Town Council has promised to visit the young people's project and establish the best way to involve young people in local initiatives (see Appendix 3 for minutes of the implementation meeting with the Council). The core values and resources are embedded in the shared vision with an obligation to achieve common objectives central to the collective groups or networks of people. Narayan and Pritchett argue that people



should work together as cohesive groups in order to achieve their objectives through rules and obligations that are embedded in social capital (Narayan & Pritchett, 1997). In effect, Narayan and Pritchett suggest that ‘the rules, norms, obligations, reciprocity and trust embedded in social relations, social structures and society’s institutional arrangements... enable members to achieve their individual and community objectives’ (Narayan & Pritchett, 1997).

Furthermore, the young people said that they would like to have community dialogue with older adults. This could take place through common local consultation with the Council or through organising an intergenerational programme. This recommendation was put forward to the Council, as it provides learning and understanding between all ages. Again, social capital of this form could facilitate intimacy and attachment between all ages, not only for relationships that traditionally are thought of as being intimate (e.g. between partners or between parents and children), but for more extended ties that produce relationships at a community level, wherein individuals feel strong bonds and attachment to places.

### ***The benefits of creating an acceptable community for the young people***

Bringing all the above recommendations into reality for the young people at the Supported Housing Moonday project and in Rise and Happyside County in general will add to the economic, physical and social well-being of those young people in supported or public sector accommodation. Implementing the above agenda for change will reduce crime and also facilitate the connection of young people to the wider community.

Engaging young people in community dialogue will give them an opportunity to carry out community work as active citizens. It will give them a sense of belonging and clarify their responsibilities, such as turning away from criminal activities. Involving

young people in local consultation will give them the opportunity to integrate into their wider community, with their input on local agenda giving indication of their engagement in civic activities. Getting young people to work as well as to pursue further education will provide them with meaningful daytime activities.

This project made the recommendation to the Moonday project of considering the idea of modelling their service to young homeless people, based on social inclusion, thereby offering the tenants an opportunity for choice and control over their support plan. The Moonday project will review their support plan in the form of an outcome measuring star chart in order to achieve the person-centred support plan.

It was also suggested that the Moonday project added a quality measure to the support plan in terms of a person-centred approach, education, work, and community/social engagement of the tenants as part of their key performance indicators, with data to be collated on a quarterly basis. The inclusion of the above data to the service KPIs will improve the quality of the service and provide young people with an opportunity to be part of the wider community.

## **Report to the Management on the Outcome**

The first step taken in producing a report for the management was to collate the information that the young people and staff supplied during the research enquiries. The responses were gathered and analysed for presentation to the management in April 2010.

Several informal meetings took place with the managers and the Assistant Regional Director of the organisation to discuss the implementation timetable for the support plan tools designed as a result of the findings, as well as an employment opportunity that will

enhance social capital in supported housing through engagement with the Job Centres, local businesses and the local college (see Appendix 3 for email evidence).

A further meeting was arranged with the management and Senior Housing Officer at Sunnyside Borough Council to discuss the findings from the research, as detailed in Tables 7.1 and 7.2, presented to the Senior Housing Officer as the summary of responses from the participants. The Senior Housing Officer agreed with the recommendations made at the meeting for the Sunnyside Borough Council to make a contribution to the employment opportunities for the young people by providing work placements at the Local Authority and in private organisations. The Senior Housing Officer made the further commitment at the meeting to support consultation of the young people in supported housing, including assisting with social engagement.

The staff and young people also met for an update on the research results and how to take forward recommendations on the support model for employment, and training and employment opportunities.

In short, the report was produced through consultation with staff, managers and young people in line with the schematic diagram in Figure A2.1 of this report. For instance, feedback sessions were held and an agenda for change developed that led to the end product.

Finally, tests were carried out on recommendations through a couple of visits to the Moonday Supported Housing project to observe the use of new support plan tools with young people and measure the progress they were making to their goals, including health, employment/training and education, community integration, tenancy management, and friend/family networks.

The management report outlined that employment, training and education are required in supported housing in order for the homeless people to sustain improvements to health and engage with other people in the community, as well as to secure job opportunities. An article in Appendix 5 of this project report demonstrates that, in order to develop social capital amongst clients, supported housing providers need to work in new ways with partners such as local businesses and charities to pursue shared objectives. The article went further to show how a particular organisation provides learning development and employment services to its residents, for example. The article summarised the benefits for homeless people of training/work placement programmes as a salary, holiday entitlement and life coaching, and clients can learn to be economically active and achieve greater independence. The case for the remodelling of the supported housing scheme as a centre of lifelong learning would indeed enable homeless residents to focus on skills development towards good health and economic well-being.

## Chapter 9 Impact of the Outcomes

This chapter describes the outward manifestation of this project.

**Employment:** This project led to an increase in numbers of young people at the Moonday project engaging in paid and unpaid job. This was as a result of recommendations made to incorporate the statistics of people engaging with the labour market to their key performance indicators. During the research enquiries two people (as recorded in Table 7.2) were in paid work, and a visit to the project in March 2011 confirmed that about six people had part-time work, two had full-time jobs, and another nine undertook voluntary roles. However, the national economic predicament means that the Borough Council cannot support the employment initiative programme proposed in its meeting of March 2010. It went through a comprehensive saving review that proposed savings of £40 million to be made over the five years from 2010 to 2015. However, the support staff made a decision to include the employment project as a core element of their service provision to homeless people.

This project recommended that the project should work closely with external agencies such as specialist employment agencies and local education and training, as outlined in Chapter 8 of this report, in order to maximise employment opportunities for the young people in the borough. It was further suggested that the supported housing organisation should review its service specification to reflect health and social inclusion services. In effect, the organisation accepted the above suggestions, through which they created an employment team within the service to work with the support workers. The new employment initiative for young people was set up under a team of staff known as Integrated Employment and Social Inclusion Workers. The employment team is working with the local Job Centre and

Brainfield Education, and staff are signposting young people to local recruitment agencies for support through empowerment.

The new core elements of the service at the Moonday project are health support, employment, training and education, tenancy management, community involvement and capacity inclusion, and family/friend networks. Young people are making use of the above core elements of the service through social support connection from various angles — professionals, friends and family — specified in their support plan. This is why the new person-centred support plan encompasses the specific process and information below:

- The needs of the young people were considered in the support plan to measure their achievement and circumstances.
- Having identified their achievement and circumstances, young people will need to decide on social, economic and health-related activities that they would like to carry out in order to overcome their difficulties.
- Having identified the activities that would enable them to overcome their difficulties, they will need to identify the people who will assist them in carrying out the activities that need to be achieved within a specific deadline.

Putting all the above core elements of the service into perspective, social capital can play a significant role in supported housing, if we are to follow the work of Berkman and Syme (1979), who wrote about the benefits of social networks to vulnerable people. The extract in Chapter 3 of this research project can be revisited to confirm the link between the research and the literature review of social capital from professional perspective. Take, for instance, Berkman and Syme (1979), who through their work on social networks, host resistance and mortality clarified the benefits of social networks to vulnerable people and the need to promote social networks through at least five primary

pathways: (1) from provision of social support, (2) social influence, (3) social engagement, (4) person-to-person contact, and (5) access to resources and material goods.

## **The Core Element of the Service**

***Learning engagement:*** The research findings found that six young people were in education during a visit to the Moonday Project in March 2010. A visit a year later in March 2011 confirmed 15 young people engaging with both formal and informal learning at the local college and Trust Training project. Although this is still low in terms of the Project's performance target, staff will continue to work hard with young people in this area of support service.

The Borough Council invited a representative from the Moonday project to local discussions in August 2010. The representative is also a member of the Central Resident Committee of the organisation.

***Outcome measuring tools:*** During the project, the majority of Supported Housing staff were not happy using measuring tools known as distance travel and the recovery model star chart. Therefore, basic and easy-to-assimilate measuring tools were devised (see Appendix 1), and the model tested with one of the tenants, who volunteered to help assess it. The tool was implemented twice. The first occasion was in June 2010, when the tenant and their Housing Support Worker were observed working with the outcome measurement star chart. The tenant reflected on their current circumstances to develop objectives in each specific topic of the support plan, such as health, work, confidence, social networks, addiction, hope and trust, and housing.

The tenant plotted an outcome star that shows a non-linear representation to demonstrate progress around their needs. The diagram is an indication of how a certain

aspect of someone's life needs improvement. Objectives were set in the support plan for another six months and a review took place in December on changes in the well-being of the tenant in the quadrant of the outcome measuring tools highlighted in Appendix 1. The feedback from the tenant on the reliability of the measuring tools was very positive: they said that it was easy to engage with the tools.

Both the outcome measuring tools and the traffic light diagram shown in Appendix 1 were drawn from the topics and objectives areas of the support plan being used by Supported Housing Ltd. In the latter, the red light indicates when the vulnerable homeless people moved into the accommodation-based service for help. People need more than just housing at this stage, due to the various effects of homelessness on their health that need to be resolved in order to enhance a basic or standard living condition. This can be linked to what Third and Yanetta (2000) and Fitzpatrick, Kemp and Klinker (2000) call social circumstances beyond the simple need for shelter. The elements of care and support funding by the government are to serve the social and health needs of people through partnership work between agencies.

The amber light symbolises the stage at which vulnerable people are getting ready to engage with the service or support provided by the network of agencies.

The green light is the stage where vulnerable people have met all their expectations or objectives around well-being, with structural support from their support network. They are at the stage where they can engage shoulder-to-shoulder with anyone in the community.

Interagency work between specialist agencies and Housing Support Workers plays a significant role in the progress homeless people are making in their well-being. Therefore, this project report will make a strong recommendation for Supported Housing



Ltd and any other support service providers to adopt the above measuring tools or any other easy-to-follow sample so as to monitor the progress their service users are making in their well-being. Homeless people should be empowered to be able to use the above tools in measuring the progression of their own well-being.

In conclusion, this chapter highlights how a network of specialist support agencies and staff from supported housing is able to make a difference to the lives of vulnerable people through social capital. This chapter also clarifies how the professionals support the well-being of vulnerable homeless people through common objectives, partnership agreements (otherwise known as service level agreements), sharing of working knowledge, best practice and understanding. This was what Ostrom referred to in his work on collective action and the evolution of social norms, in which he described social capital as simply the shared knowledge, understanding, norms, rules, and expectations about patterns of interactions that groups of individuals bring to a recurrent activity (Ostrom, 2000). Therefore, it is possible that social capital can address the effect of homelessness on the lives of vulnerable people and make a significant contribution to their well-being.

Supported Housing Ltd took on board the key recommendations made on employment opportunities for young people by directing them to Jobcentre Plus, recruitment consultants, charity shops, and direct contact with employers. Support workers assisted the homeless people in engaging with their employment issues by using the outcome star chart and support planning tools to identify clear objectives or actions that will enable them to develop skills and experience in paid and unpaid work. The supported housing project (Moonday Supported Housing) declared that the simplified outcome star model, which is different from the generic version used across the sector, enables their residents or tenants to have more insight into their support needs and, as such, be able to

set up objectives or activities to enable them to address their problems in person-centred thinking.

The person-centred thinking gives the tenants of supported housing an opportunity to set goals and develop a plan that identifies the services and support they want and need and who will provide these services. The plan builds on individual strengths, interests and talents, whereby targeting assistance to achieve specific results in the person's life. The supported housing project confirmed that the approach has been motivating individuals with support needs to live more meaningful fulfilling lives by increasing choice and control.

Staff identified that the service or supported housing project has given their tenants an allocated budget to cater for groups for personal activities and group events in the community. They said that the allocated budget on individuals' activities is linked to the key objectives in their support plan (outcome star support model identified in the recommended chapter).

The team leader suggested that it would be useful to look at changing the life skills expenditure budget to the social inclusion budget, as it gives an opportunity for their tenants to connect to the wider society, such as the cinema, amusement park and gym. Changing the life skills budget to the social inclusion or social capital budget will enable tenants or homeless people to take ownership of activities in their support plan and to resolve social exclusion issues.

Generally, support plans were reviewed for all the participants who took part in the interview, and the team leader reported that the implementation of the recommendations, including those regarding education, employment, social networks, confidence building, trust and management had made an impact on the lives of the young people. He reported

that the recommendations of the project were embedded into the support plan in conjunction with the outcome star chart to monitor the progress of the homeless people in all areas of their needs and well-being. The team leader stated:

Our tenants are making wonderful improvement in their life; many of them are now showing interest in getting paid and unpaid jobs, and some are spending their day engaging in the meaningful activities.

The team also said that all these came back as a result of support workers making good efforts to connect tenants to services through the structured support network model recommended.

The team leader provided evidence of how support workers supported tenants in the community through working with other partners in a structured approach that identified:

- The needs of the homeless young person and how the effect of homelessness on health can be resolved;
- Skills and capacity building that will motivate the socio-economic engagement of young people; and
- Activities and resources available in the community so as to integrate young, socially excluded people into the wider community.

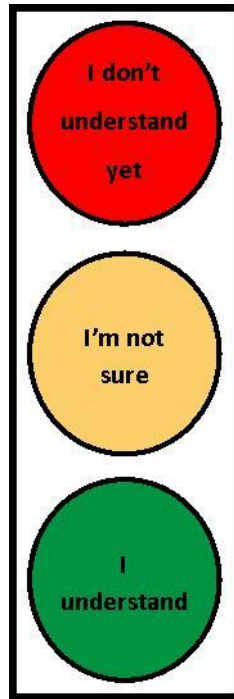
In effect, support workers are working through a structured approach with all the agencies mentioned in Chapter 8, including specialist health workers, education and the Council's housing department, to support young people in sustaining healthy living, to enhance their living skills and to gain employment and social skills. This is what Berkman (1979) clarified as the benefit of social networks to vulnerable people and the need to promote social networks through at least five primary pathways: (1) from provision of social support, (2) social influence, (3) social engagement, (4) person-to-person contact, and (5) access to resources and material goods.

Support workers also said that their tenants have been able to use the outcome star model in Appendix 1 to see how they are progressing with their life skills. They said that one of their tenants was able to measure improvement with their lifestyle and how they are making links to the community, friends, network of support, and families.

One support worker also stated in an informal feedback meeting that took place in June 2010 that he was able to use Figures A6.1 and A6.2 to demonstrate to the tenants how the network of support agencies are working together to support the well-being of the tenants in supported housing. The support worker said further that the tenant in question acknowledged how he was being valued by people working with him; as a result, he started to engage with the support service in a positive pathway.

Support workers also connect young people to the wider community through their participation at local events. One worker interviewed said that the participation of young people at free local events strengthened their networking capacity and social engagements.

**Anti-Social Behaviour:** The service confirmed that anti-social behaviour reduced significantly with the new tenants and they also said that they look forward to receiving positive feedback from the local community when the service moved to its previous base.



**Figure 9.1**    **Traffic light diagram**

## Chapter 10    Conclusions

In conclusion, this project was set up to show how increasing social capital can enhance the well-being of vulnerable homeless people in supported housing, and its contribution to the community.

The aims of this research project were fulfilled through a fit-for-purpose research approach and methodology, evaluations of information on homelessness and the concept of social capital gathered through academic literature, policy contexts, and investigations with the participants.

In effect, this research project has shown that it is possible to resolve the effect of homelessness on vulnerable people, chiefly through networking and effective partnership work between housing professionals and specialist agencies. Coming from the angle of Putnam's work, which recognised that networks that constitute social capital as conduits for the flow of helpful information that facilitates achieving our goals, social capital operates through psychological and biological processes to improve an individual's lives. Putnam went further to position the value of social capital to the community, stating that community connectedness is not just about warm, fuzzy tales of civic triumph. In measurable and well-documented ways, social capital makes an enormous difference to our lives (Putnam, 2000).

Lave and Wenger made us understand that learning and working through participation in groups and engagement with the 'daily round' can make the outcome of the interagency work of interest and informative.

The findings also established how past behaviour such as criminal activities, shoplifting, drug and alcohol dependency, and other anti-social behaviour by young

homeless people had led to the exclusion of current tenants of Supported Housing Ltd from employment opportunities in Rise and Happyside County and the wider community. But the in-depth discussion in Sections 7.44 (3) and 7.44 (4) around empowering young people through social engagement in the community showed that creating an acceptable community for them and helping them to develop social skills could lead to the rebuilding of character.

It was not only in the employment sphere that young people were isolated; they were also indirectly excluded from social activities in the community due to their economic status. It was mentioned in the research report that the majority of the homeless people cannot afford the cost of social and recreational activities as a result of their economic status.

This project work has shown that interagency work between support workers, specialist agency workers such as Connexions, health professionals, Brainfield College, and Sunnyside Town Council in the areas of education, employment, health, and housing will make significant contributions to the health of young people as well as enhance their socio-economic well-being.

It was also argued in this research work that young people are excluded from consultations on local or community issues. Consultation with young people in supported housing has never been considered before these research findings and through a project discussion on 'creating an acceptable community for young people'. Therefore, it is possible for the voice of young people to be reflected in community consultations and decision processes through social capital.

This project also explored the types of social network that exist in supported housing. The predominant type of network is bonding social capital, but it was argued that

this type of social capital is not enough for vulnerable people, as they will need to be connected to the wider community through bridging and linking social capital through their support workers, external agency workers and any other strong ties.

This project has shown that the lives of young people can still be turned around through the agenda for social change.

This project report has shown the reason why young homeless people in supported housing will need social capital to enhance good living conditions from the standpoint of health, economic engagement and social participation in the community through the intervention of professional agencies working together to achieve a common purpose in the interest of young people. The literature review highlighted how working in the community of practice could enhance knowledge and social-economic benefits of the group of people in the network of support, which was demonstrated through the work of Lave and Wenger covered in *Situated Learning: Legitimate peripheral participation* (1991). This was later augmented in works by Jean Lave (1993) and Etienne Wenger (1999, 2002), which set the scene for some significant innovations in practice within organisations. Lave and Wenger clarified that situated learning can take place anywhere — home, schools and in the civic or leisure engagements. In a nutshell, communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (Wenger, 2007).

Berkman and Syme (1979), through their work on social networks, host resistance, and mortality, clarified the benefit of social networks to vulnerable people and the need to promote social networks through at least five primary pathways: (1) from provision of social support, (2) social influence, (3) social engagement, (4) person-to-person contact, and (5) access to resources and material goods.



The analysis of research also confirmed how the agencies from Local Authority housing, police, local businesses or employers, health professionals, the local college (Brainfield College), and the Moonday project decided to work together in order to facilitate activities that will contribute to the life improvement of young homeless people through health service provision — social-economic engagements.

The recommendations and framework for a social agenda for change are set out as follows.

### **10.1 Employment**

Employment is one of the key exclusion issues identified in this research, with a proposal being made to Sunnyside Town Council to work with Supported Housing so as to resolve the difficulties the young people face in competing for the same job opportunities as any other people in the community:

- The Borough Council agreed to invest their resources in the economic engagements of the young people through work placements;
- The Borough Council planned to take up a lead through a joint working approach with the Supported Housing Moonday project to promote work placements and employment opportunity projects for young people in Rise and Happyside County; and
- The Borough Council also proposed using the outcome of these work placements to justify changes in their behaviour towards work and the benefit to the businesses as well as to the community.

## **10.2 Education**

Brainfield College and the Supported Housing Moonday project will continue to work together to support the hard-to-engage people into education. As shown in the research work, Brainfield College should work more closely with businesses and the Foyer or other homeless projects in the local community to find out the special interests of those individuals, which may include skills valuable to the employment market. This may also make vulnerable people with special needs competitive in the labour market. For example, some vulnerable young people with mental health problems might need specialist education services in order to engage in the labour market. Having special needs requirements in place for people with learning disabilities or mental health problems might give them the confidence to get involved in the labour market.

## **10.3 Improving Social Participation**

The outcome of these research findings and the project discussions led to negotiations with Sunnyside Town Council to help increase the social amenities for young people in Rise and Happyside County, within their financial resources. The Council, in effect, agreed to look into social amenities for the young people, and a consultation forum will be organised to explore their interest in social amenities in Rise and Happyside County.

This research project made recommendations to Sunnyside Town Council to support the project in ‘creating an acceptable community for the young people’, by including young people in the consultations on new developments and local or community-wide initiatives.

## **10.4 Social Character Building**

This research project used the findings and discussions to recommend a change in the social character of the young homeless people in order to remove the negative stigma imposed on them by the community. They will need to work with their workers and engage with external agencies in order to address the issue of anti-social behaviour.

### ***Support plan and social capital measurement tool***

The support plan document should be reviewed in such a way that all the above recommendations are embedded with clear objectives and measuring tools known as outcome stars. The topics should focus on what the particular homeless person will do to be able to reach their highest potential and socio-economic well-being through health improvement, employment opportunities, social engagement in the community, and family and transient connections.

If all of the above recommendations can be followed through, the goal of the project — ‘increasing social capital in supported housing and in the process, its contribution to the community’ — will have been fulfilled.

### ***Impact of the outcome:***

The outcome of this project has been positive, as feedback from senior professionals from the homeless sector confirms that provision of health support in a person-centred approach as well as empowerment of homeless people on education, employment and social network skills are required in order to increase social capital in supported housing. For example, Gina Rocque-Drayton stated in her feedback that all recommendations made in this project around the implementation of a support plan, review of outcome star measurement, engagement of homeless people with paid and unpaid work, and the integration of homeless people to a wider community are useful to her organisation.

As seen in Appendix 4, Gina stated that an outcome star chart is a good tool for promoting economic engagement, health improvement and integration of homeless people into the wider community. She commented that the outcome star and traffic light are useful tools for promoting economic engagement, health and for connecting homeless people to the community. She also supported the conclusions that providing homeless people with opportunities to engage in the labour market requires basic skills around community, team working and confidence building.

Jeremy Swain also commented on the benefit of this research project to the supported housing and homeless sector in terms of how the work pleasingly addressed the structure of professional support to homeless people. For example, feedback highlighted further areas of work to be done on social capital in supported housing. Generally, he had found this work to be an interesting piece of research that illustrated both the importance of a person-centred approach and its benefits, as well as the extent to which there is some way further to go before the priorities of the service user become central to the care planning and case management process.

## **10.5 Limitations on Practice and Service Due to National Policy or Initiative**

Solutions to increase social capital in supported housing could be nothing but a waste of effort if the work of practitioners in supported housing cannot be guaranteed, due to ongoing government policy on a comprehensive saving agenda. Such a strategy for a period of over a year could be perceived by the government as a way of economising or managing public funds, but it has a major impact on practitioners in the supported housing sector because failure of their organisation to retain the funding could put their employment at risk.

In supported housing, support staff including managers or senior practitioners are currently experiencing TUPE Transfer as a clause to the service or contract tender. In most cases, the administrative authorities are making it known in the tender that TUPE Transfer of all current staff in the service may or may not apply. The salaries of the practitioners working in supported housing are attached to the income stream administered by the local government on behalf of the Community for Local Government.

This type of funding arrangement has left the staff in a vulnerable situation whereby the new support provider may, in some cases, make existing staff redundant from the beginning of the new contract. A situation like this could lead to inconsistency in the service delivery, particularly around new changes and service development. Generally, the support that will enable individual young homeless people to engage with health services, skills development around independent living, and socio-economic participation in the context of social capital may lack quality.

Finally, the policymaker will need to examine how the direct or indirect impact of their initiatives or national policy might affect homeless people. The policymaker also needs to consider the inclusiveness of homeless people or a marginalised group in their initiatives through disposition of resources that would enable them to actively participate in such an innovative agenda such as the Big Society. The young people at the Moonday project will easily benefit from this agenda (the Big Society), due to their current involvement on the community agenda as recommended by this project report.

## **Chapter 11    Postscripts**

### **11.1 How Recommendations were Made**

All aspects of recommendations made were reinforced as a solution for improvement. The recommendations were made jointly with the participants in some cases, while others were made by myself as a researcher. To start with, I guided both the staff and young people with the identification of changes through my practice and professional knowledge. Young people and staff made contributions to changes around social interaction with other people in the community and consultation on local initiatives.

I made recommendations on how paid and unpaid jobs could be maximised for young people. I initiated joint working between the Local Authority Housing and Regeneration Team and the Supported Housing Moonday project. I also made recommendations at the participatory group for the Supported Housing Moonday project to engage in a collaborative work with local businesses such as the Job Centres, employment agencies, local supermarket, and social business centres for unpaid work. The young people in the group agreed that an employment initiative would provide them with potential employment skills and an opportunity to secure a paid job. I also used my professional practice and knowledge to recommend improvements on joint working between the support workers from the Moonday project and specialist agencies (social workers, alcohol and substance use, and other networks of support agencies). I designed a network of support agencies model that would clarify the roles of practitioners, the sharing of knowledge and how the professionals work with one another. The participatory group agreed on the recommendation made on the implementation of outcome star measurement. I also worked with the participatory group to design a traffic light that would support less

articulate, young people in engaging with their support plan and measure how well they are progressing with their objectives.

## **11.2 Appraisal of the Research Findings**

This chapter focused on a unique finding which was not known already: what the main issue in supported housing is around social capital.

In this project, I found an atypical reason for homelessness: a new family structure. We talk about family breakdowns, but focus less on how the introduction of a new partner can lead to a young person leaving the family home. There was a also difference in responses between homeless people with a criminal background and those without, in the sense that those with a criminal background cited the reason for their homelessness as criminal conviction or re-offending. The homeless people in this project cited the reasons as relationship breakdown, low income, LGBT issues and mental health problems.

This project made a link between social and human capital in terms of utilising skills and qualification for the economic gains. The project report went further to establish the benefit of human capital based on psychological reasons, economical reasons and social reasons.

The project also established that young people could not get a job as a result of the behaviour made few attempts to meet the management of the local supermarket to resolve the issue of negative stigma attached to the young people from the Moonday project. It was gathered that the staff at the Moonday project chose to blame the management of the superstore for not offering young people a job.

It should be noted from this research project that building social capital in supported housing was advocated through the Dream Deferred project. Social capital was

not clearly defined in the support service at the Moonday project prior to this research project. To make social capital well defined, I had to advocate for the support plan to be modelled around an outcome star, which was demonstrated in Appendix 1 of this project report.

### **11.3 Experience**

The experience gained from the research work has given me an opportunity to become a successful trainer with my current employer, in addition to my role as contract manager. In essence, I have started carrying out training for frontline staff on the Recovery Star Model, similar to the outcome star discussed in Appendix 4.

With my current employer, I have also used the skills and knowledge from this research approach to carry out the evaluation of the recovery star with the customers of Floating Support Service (see Appendix 4 for details). The outcome of the evaluation led to the re-modification of the recovery star in a way that promotes the engagement of the customers with the document or tools for setting objectives in their support plan.

As Acting Contract Manager, I have promoted social capital in my current service by handing over the control of the life skills budget to the customers. The control over the life skills budget also led to customers becoming involved with internal activities organised by the service.



## **Chapter 12    Epilogue – Reflections on Impact**

This chapter discusses how I reflect on my work-based learning from Middlesex University to produce this project report, and acts as an epilogue. These reflections do not hide from the challenges encountered during this project and the chapter thus focuses on hindsight, insight and foresight reflections. It is involved with how we look back on events, possibly reinterpreting them and drawing out the lessons learned. Following the findings that emerged from this research and the building up of events that took place during the course programme, I have been able to draw out some lessons.

I started the journey of this research work in January 2007, with a view to carrying out a dissertation on ‘increasing social capital in supported housing and, in the process, its contribution to the community’. As I proceeded with this programme, I gained more clarifications for this research topic through the work-based learning programme materials and module components at Middlesex University. The lessons learned from this programme also imparted confidence and a wide knowledge of field research work.

At the beginning, I was not thinking about conducting research on a specific homeless group. All I wanted to achieve was to establish how social capital can be maximised in supported housing and how improving the quality of life and well-being of vulnerable people could make a significant contribution to the community. However, there was a change of circumstance that led to my refocusing the client base for this research to single homeless people. There was a moment when the situation at the Turnaround Project became static and it was difficult to progress with the research work due to the project experiencing challenges from the tenants. Therefore, I had to renegotiate another research project base and switch to the Supported Housing Moonday project in Rise and Happyside County.

My research work with the Supported Housing Moonday project concluded with a productive outcome due to their agreement to work with all areas of the project recommendations with Sunnyside Town Council.

## **12.1 Insight Reflection**

Insight is the most subtle skill because it involves being both in a situation and detached from that situation — simultaneously participating and interpreting, adjusting and learning from the situation. The gathering of information on homelessness during my learning agreement stage/project feasibility report had equipped me with the earliest and up-to-date knowledge of social networks of the homeless people, including how difficult it may be to engage some of them in internal and community-based services. Although I work for another organisation as a service manager, I was not directly involved with the present situation. Therefore, it was easy for me to detach myself from the situation. Most of the issues in homeless projects are similar to those faced by all providers of support services. I still have to come into this research work from an objective and neutral background; this helped me to adjust the situation around maximising networks, which will add quality to the well-being of the vulnerable homeless people through social capital. Coming from my service to another service enabled me to see situations differently and thus resolve them differently.

The managerial status within supported housing as well as my strategic role as Education and Training Officer for the Chartered Institute of Housing's Turnaround Project Branch Committee gave me the authority to make recommendations that will impact on the work of the Supported Housing Moonday project. The recommendations were also accepted as a compelling case, as they will:

- Foster relationships between young people and older adults through the intergeneration project;
- Improve consultation with young people, including those at the Supported Housing Moonday project, on local agenda issues; and
- Maximise economic engagement for young people through job placements, and influence other employers to sign up for this.

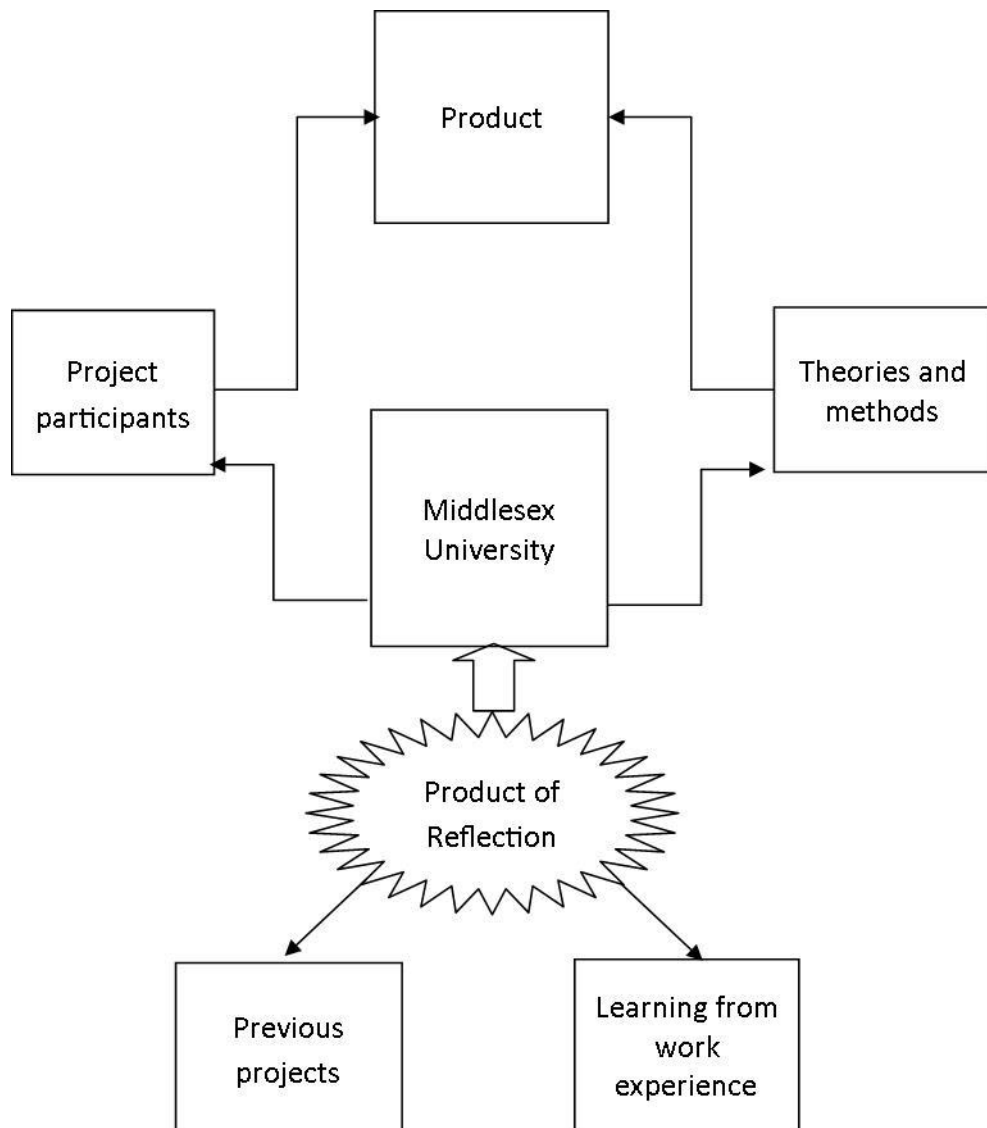
My role in this research was maintained right through the project activity as worker/researcher and I did not allow my ‘technical knowhow’ to affect the outcome.

## **12.2 Foresight**

Foresight involves reflecting back on how I started the programme from the interview stage and what I planned to achieve. My foresight in this project is fulfilled by knowing what I want to achieve as the end product of this research from the interview stage of the DProf programme and the beginning of the course. I started working on this project from the point of the theory required in translating the practical and experiential knowledge into reality and to make the outcome of this project achievable and unique.

As such, I began looking into my previous learning at work and how such learning and experience to date will be of benefit to my research project. In the learning and review course programme, I was able to reflect on events in which I was involved with other people in terms of my contribution, the turning point, opportunities, and changes in my organisation and the impact on my networks. Focusing on changes (as highlighted in the ‘Review of Previous Learning Programme’) gave me a foresight of what this research project should achieve in terms of changes that will impact on the well-being of vulnerable homeless people.

The course module on ‘Research and Development Project Capability’, as well as another aspect of the course module on ‘Advanced Developments in Professional Practice’, gave me insight into research design and the methods to adopt for this research programme. I was able to reflect on the projects I had carried out in the past both for my MSc course programme and for projects carried out at work, where I engaged other professionals in Lewisham as the Chair of the Turnaround Project, Borough of Lewisham Supporting People Mental Health Workshop Sector, to research wider opportunities for vulnerable people with mental illness. Reflecting on both projects gave rise to the imaginative projection of this work into the future and the changes to be achieved as the end product but from the present (as at the time I was writing the course modules on Research and Development Project Capability and Advanced Developments in Professional Practice).



**Figure 12.1 Relationship between previous learning and end product**

Figure 12.1 above is used to describe how reflection on previous projects at work and on my dissertation and learning from work experience became helpful in developing research methods and thinking about how to translate previous learning from work into an academic report (as demonstrated in the Review of Previous Learning course module).

In the diagram, it can be seen that Middlesex University provided the support that was required to contextualise the experience and learning from work through reflection,

course materials and guidance from an advisor from the beginning of the programme to the project research (dissertation) stage.

During the project research (from the enquiry stage to the completion of the end product), I developed the following thoughts:

- What do I think is going on here?
- What did I intend to happen? What did happen?
- How is what I am observing connected with deeper theories about how things work?
- Here is my view and how I arrived at it; how do others see it?
- What assumptions am I making?
- What role am I playing?
- What am I thinking and feeling?
- What leads me to think and feel the way I do?
- What am I going to do with my insight?

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### **Internet resources**

(all accessed between January 2010 and June 2010)

Evans (2002). CONSCISE Project on Social Capital – [www.conscise.info](http://www.conscise.info).

ESRC Report on social capital – <http://www.haworthjt.com/Wellbeing-esrc/seminar4-notes.html#capital>.

ESRC project on Family Life and Social Capital – [www1.lsbu.ac.uk/families](http://www1.lsbu.ac.uk/families).

Health & Homelessness – [www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/03/20774/53766](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/03/20774/53766)

[www.innovativelearning.com/teaching/actionresearch](http://www.innovativelearning.com/teaching/actionresearch)

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Social Capital Journal –

[http://muse.jhu.edu/demo/journal\\_of\\_democracy/v006/putnam.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/demo/journal_of_democracy/v006/putnam.html)

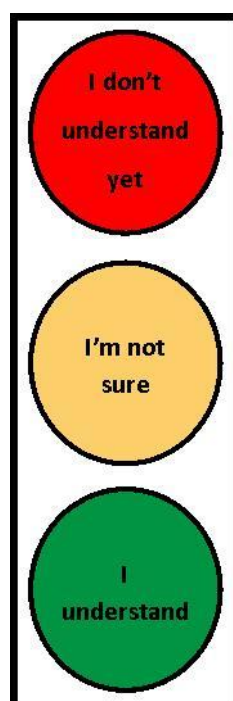


Social networks and social support – [www.enotes.com/social-networks-social-support](http://www.enotes.com/social-networks-social-support)  
[www.1ppg.vt.edu/papers/qhfumajorpaper](http://www.1ppg.vt.edu/papers/qhfumajorpaper)

## Appendix 1 Traffic Light and Recovery Star Chart

The 'traffic light' was tested at Moonday project and this established the benefit of a simplified outcome star recommended in this project. It was devised as a useful tool to be used in conjunction with the outcome star chart to measure how tenants are progressing with their support needs through engagement with their key support worker and network of support agencies. The traffic lights symbolised:

- When tenants are not ready to engage with the community-based services
- The amber symbolised they are ready to engage with the community-based services through network of support agencies
- When the tenants are fully engaging with the services with consistent improvement with their well-being.



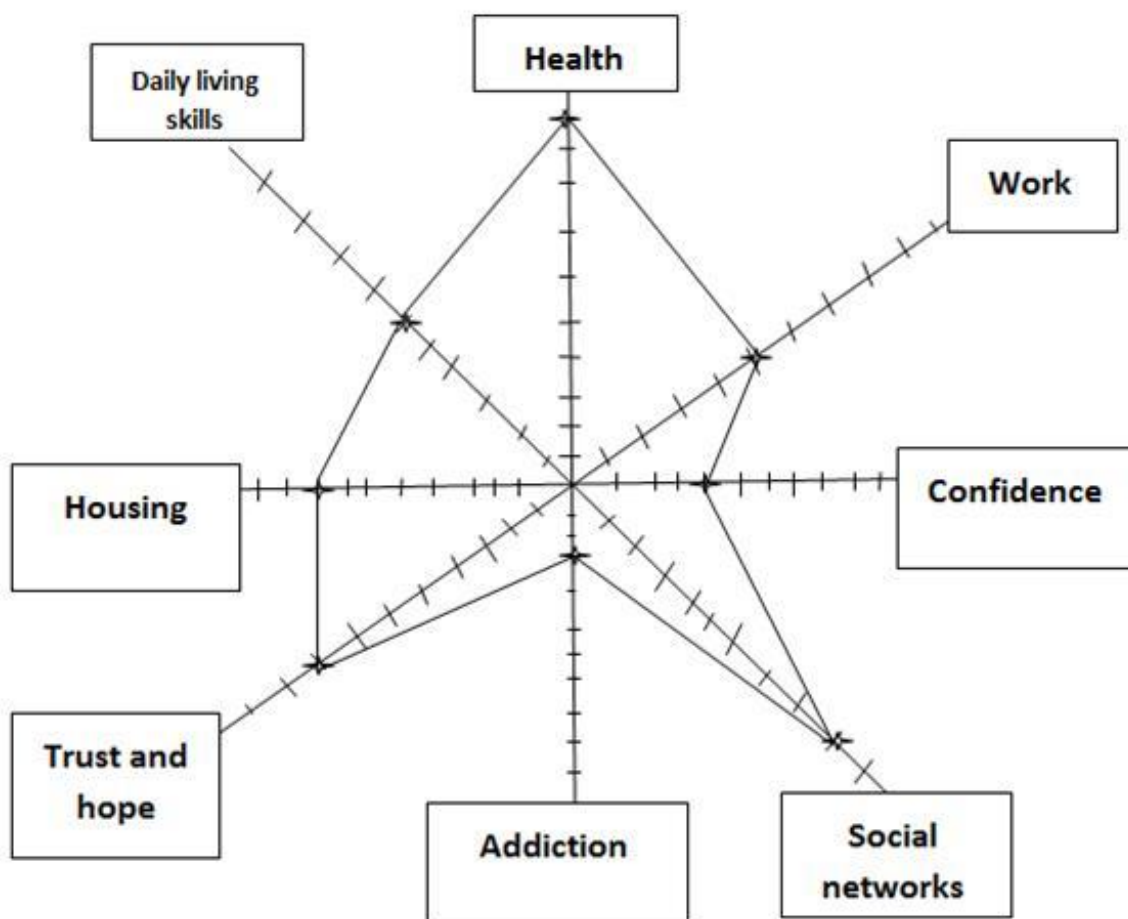
**Figure A1.1 Traffic light**

**Table A1.1 Objectives chart**

Topic areas for homeless person or resident to achieve	Objectives – Actions to promote independence, skills and well-being	Possible scores – Can use the example of traffic light for scoring system
DAILY LIVING SKILLS	Budgeting and debts Benefit claims Cooking and food storage Laundry and cleaning	<p><b>Red light:</b></p> <p>0 – I don't understand how to work out the actions.</p> <p>1 to 2 – Let me be on my own, I don't need help.</p> <p><b>Amber light:</b></p> <p>3 to 4: I am not sure; I need someone else to do all these for me.</p> <p>5 to 6: I am making a difference with my skills.</p> <p><b>Green light:</b></p> <p>7 to 8 – High esteem and evidence of achieving objectives.</p> <p>9 to 10 – Can do things without any help from staff and co-residents.</p>
HEALTH	Physical health needs Mental health needs Using local health facilities Visiting consultant/specialist	<p>To follow the scoring system identified above.</p>

HOUSING	<p>Living with other customers</p> <p>Health and safety in the property</p> <p>Support to address/resolve/prevent breaches of tenancy</p> <p>Planning for move-on/ accessing other housing</p>	To follow the scoring system identified above.
EMPLOYMENT/ TRAINING OR USE OF LEISURE TIME	<p>Current situation and future aims</p> <p>Access to education and career services</p> <p>Structured daytime activities</p>	To follow the scoring system identified above.
PERSONAL	<p>Social skills and personal support networks</p> <p>Coping with personal difficulties / problems</p> <p>Drug and alcohol use</p> <p>Personal safety in the community</p>	To follow the scoring system identified above.

The progress residents are making can be plotted onto a star chart, as in the example below:



**Figure A1.2 Star chart showing resident's progress**

The overall outcome star measurement can be interpreted in the form of a contour.

In a visit to the project in June 2010, a tenant volunteered to use the outcome model chart/star with their Housing Support Worker to measure their current condition and how they will make progress with their well-being through engagement with health, tenancy and socio-economic activities.

The tenants reflected on their current condition in the following ways under the quadrants of:

**Health** – Thought they were mentally and physically sound through support they had received from their GP, Community Practice Nurse, Psychiatrist Consultant, Housing Support Worker and Drug Counsellor. They said that they were on green light with the score of 9 points. The tenant told their Housing Support Worker that they did not need to develop support plan on health.

**Work** - The tenant undergoing college programme on hairdressing. Thought that the outcome of their NVQ Level 3 should give them pathway to employment. They put themselves down on amber light with 5 points. They said that they had missed going to college on a stressful day due to pressure of course work. Hence, developed support on coping with the college.

**Daily living skills** – Start taking responsibility in prioritising bills, cleaning and washing. But still need support on healthy eating and cooking as opposed to take away food. The tenant put themselves on amber light with six points and developed on healthy living by attending group programme organised in the project around health and diet.

**Confidence** - Still working on their esteem as a result of they had badly treated by their parents. Low esteem also occasionally affecting their progress with their course of work. They want more input with their confidence building from their Housing Support Worker. Housing Support Worker will work with the tenant and external agency on how to get out of their low esteem. The tenant put themselves down red light with 4 points. The Housing Support Worker did not agree with the tenant's scoring and suggested that the tenant should be someone moving to green light with 7 point given their achievement with

college work and their engagement with community serves. However, it was the tenant's point that was plotted on the outcome star tool.

**Housing** – The tenant said that had not received warning letter due to noise nuisance. Also they had not received arrears letter for the last 8 months. They bid for housing opportunity through home search weekly. They said that they had deserved to be on green light with 8 points. They would like to continue to bid for new house as action (objective) in their support plan.

**Hope and Trust:** Very slow at trusting people around them. It took the tenant 4 months to eventually engage with their support worker and network of support agencies. The tenant said that they had started believing that they can achieve their dream and aspiration. Tenant put themselves down as green light with eight points.

**Addiction:** They said that they had improved considerably on drug dependency through support on substance use counselling. However, they said they would like to shift from addiction to hoarding unnecessary electronic gadgets in their flat. They perceived this as a big problem and it has been very difficult to follow action point in this area. Tenant put themselves down as red light with 3 points.

**Social Networks:** Engaging very well with new connection in the community, making friends at college, gym and picture. But still need support on family mediation in order to improve relationship with the family. Engaging very well with network of support agencies. Well connected to bank, social group and others. Tenant put themselves down as green with 9 points.

Six months later, Housing Support Worker reviewed the tenant's support plan and their progress in each aspect of the objective noted as:

**Health** – Reduced to amber with 6 point as the tenant had an episode of relapse.

**Work** – Secured a work experience placement and made progression to green with 8 point.

**Daily living skills** – Met the objective set on cooking and there was a shift with the traffic light from amber to green with 10 points.

**Confidence building** – Positively engaged with the action point on improving self-esteem by working with an instructor and became more confidence in taking up challenges. There was a shift in traffic light from red to amber with 6 points.

**Housing** - No issue, continue to bid for property with a strong possibility of receiving an offer of accommodation within the next 6 months. Tenant put themselves down as green with 10 points

**Hope and Trust** – Tenant continue to hope for the fulfilment of their dreams. Hence tenant remains on green light with 8 points.

**Addiction:** Still no improvement in this area and remains on the same traffic light (red) with 3 points.

**Social network:** Completely moved away from the old group and continue to maintain network groups around health, gym, education & employment, family and relatives. Still on green light with 10 points.



## **Appendix 2    Research Interview Questions at Moonday Project**

The purpose of research explained to the participant as doctorate research seeking enquiry on increasing social capital in supported housing and its contribution to the community renewal.

Procedure was also clarified with the participant in terms of data collection, security of the data and the process of recording the information. The data will be collected through interview and then written up during the interview and then to be typed later.

Interview questions with support workers:

What are the reasons for the homelessness of young people?

Do they have family connection?

If yes does their family get involve with their support?

Were they (young people) connected to any support networks while they were homeless?

What is the average length of stay of the young people in the service?

What are the ranges of services available in the local community for the well-being of the young people?

What are the difficulties in engaging the young people with –

- Employment
- Health and social care support
- Leisure activities
- Social group
- Community participation
- Education & training programme
- Family support group
- Votes and election

What can the project do to turn the life of young people round in the area of their well-being?

What can be done to ensure that the voice of the young people is represented in the community?

Interview session with the residents:

Background of work was given to the residents through their staff as:

Project Title: Increasing Social Capital in Supported Housing through work-based learning and in process, its contribution to community renewal

I will conduct structured interview session with residents thereby investigating their direct opinion of how they have perceived the development of working relationship with their support workers and other network of support agencies from the perspectives of health, employment and training and social groups.

Available tools for recording of data:

Pen and paper

Tape recorder and then transfer the result of the enquiries into a standard written record. Tenants will make up their preference.

The investigation into the development of working relationship will embrace the transformation of working relationship from informal setting to formal approach.

Realistically, the research enquires will consult with the residents about difficulties they had perceived working with support workers and external agency workers at the beginning of their tenancy.

I will ask the residents to comments on the barriers and challenges they had had to overcome on gaining access to external support services, around health, employment & training and social activities. I will link the areas of research interview question to notion of trust, confidence, values and utilisation of new contacts to enhance independent living skills and social-economic participation in the community. The notion of trust in relation to this research project and from theoretical perception of some social researchers, described trust on pages 17 to 18 of this aspect of learning agreement, as a precondition of social capital in which the benefits of the end product capable of producing useful resources .

This is in a similar way Fukuyama (1995: 26), connected “social capital to a capability that arises from the prevalence of trust in a society or in certain parts of it”.

Above all, I will endeavour to ask the residents about their involvement in setting and review of objectives towards their support plan. Will ask them about their learning, skills and knowledge they had acquired towards independent living, as a result of working relationship with their support

Whatever, the outcome of the research interview questionnaire with the residents, I will develop a simple training manual for the use of vulnerable residents in supported housing, focusing on improving independent living skills and socio – economic participation through engagement with support services from support workers and network of support agencies.

Interview Sessions with the residents of Moonday Project

Name:

Before coming to this project, what was the reason for your homelessness?

Are you accepted by people and community as a result of your homelessness?

Do you have connection of friends and who are these people and their benefits?

Apart from friends, what other connection did you have when you e.g. family and professionals and what their benefit to you?

How long have you been living in this supported housing scheme?

How did you go about building trust and working relationship with your key worker from the beginning of your tenancy to date?

Do you have any external agency workers currently working with you, who are they and how long have you been working with them?

How would you describe the role of your external agency worker in enhancing your well-being?

Are you involved with the setting of your support plan?

Are your support plan objectives related to employment, education & training, health, leisure activities and social networking? How easy can you access any of these services?

How often do you go for social gathering and leisure activities?

Do you see any of the above engagements contributing to your well-being and in what way?

Can faith or your religious play part in your well-being?

Is there any specific need you are lacking in the community and how could such need be met?

How can the voice of young people be heard in the community?

What would you like to contribute to your community? What do you need in order to make this contribution?

Who are the people or agencies you would like to be reconnected to and why?

Thank you for your participation in this research enquiries and best of luck in all your future undertakings.

## Appendix 3    Agenda for Change Meeting

Present: Senior Housing Officer (Sunnyside Borough) and Sam Jenfa (Rep for Moonday Project)

Apologies: Team Leader 1 from Moonday Project

Date of the meeting: Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2010

Venue: Borough Council Office

Items	Details/Action	Lead	Deadlines
	Draft templates of the findings:  Sam circulated draft template of the findings for the purpose of the implementation – on agenda for change.		
	Six month implementation timetable was agreed and could be extended if need be.		
	Rebuilding of Moonday's Reputation to Businesses: We will come back on this as we put you down as the lead person. This will entails inviting businesses to attend open day at the Foyer.		
	<p>Creating employment opportunity for Yong People from Moonday project: The key action points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Housing Officer will talk to her managers about work placement opportunity for Young People. The first in-take will start in June 2010 with two people from age 18 and above. The second in-take will take place in July 2010.</li> <li>• Will organise forum with the key businesses. The</li> </ul>		

	<p>forum meeting will entails – providing the update of the work placement, benefits of the scheme to the employers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The employability scheme could reshape the mindset of the young people and break the cycle of ‘benefit trap’ from one generation to the other.</li> <li>• Successful implementation of the work placement/employability scheme could generate more interest for businesses and opportunity for businesses growth in Sunnyside.</li> <li>• The work placement is a good way forward, we could get Brainfield College involve on this.</li> </ul>		
	<p>Increasing social amenities, leisure facilities including sport and entertainment for the young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Housing Officer from Council will talk to colleagues in the council on this aspect including option for LAA’s budget.</li> </ul>		
	<p>Creating Acceptable environment for young people thorough -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people want to get involve with consultations on local agenda issues.</li> <li>• They said they would like to engage with adult and older people in the community. Sam suggested intergeneration forum to address this.</li> <li>• It was agreed that the project should elect rep who will be attending their forum.</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The rep can be equipped with a free training programme from the Local Authority or Voluntary Action Group.</li> </ul> <p>Action: Senior Housing Officer will also arrange consultation meeting with the young people.</p>		
--	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	--

RE: Implementation meeting with xxxxx (Senior Housing Officer)

Wednesday, 5 May, 2010 9:15

From:

"xxxxxxxxx gov.uk">

To:

"SandF JENFA" <sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com>

Many thanks, Sam.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Senior Housing Officer

Housing Options Team

Borough Council

Direct Line:XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Email: xxxxxx.gov.uk

-----Original Message-----

**From:** SandF JENFA [mailto:sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com]

**Sent:** 04 May 2010 22:16

**To:** Senior Housing Officer

**Cc: Subject:** RE: Implementation meeting with



Hi Senior Housing Officer,

This is ok. We can reschedule the implementation meetings to October 2010.

Sam

--- On Tue, 4/5/10, Senior Housing Officer.gov.uk> wrote:

From: Senior Housing Officer <Senior Housing Officer.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Implementation meeting

To: "SandF JENFA" <sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com>

Cc: Team Leader1 from Moonday project" Manager RSxxxx.gov.uk>

Date: Tuesday, 4 May, 2010, 12:48

Hi Sam

As we discussed on the telephone last week, I am now involved in other some other projects due to "come to fruition" in June/July. I should still be able to continue with your project though and xxx Borough Council would definitely like to support xxxx with the ideas we discussed at our last meeting. However, I would suggest that any further meetings take place later into the year if possible (October onwards would be more convenient).

Kind regards.

**XXXXX**

Senior Housing Officer

Housing Options Team

Borough Council

Direct Line: xxxxx

Email: xxxx@xxx.gov.uk

-----Original Message-----

**From:** SandF JENFA [mailto:sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com]

**Sent:** 09 April 2010 15:23

**To:** Team Leader 1; Senior Housing Officer

**Subject:** Implementation meeting with Senior Housing Officer from Borough Council

Hi Team Leader,

Herewith minutes of the meeting.

I am fully up to the neck with the report, which is almost half way through. It looks like I will be able to round up the whole report in two weeks time. But I will be back to work next week.

Senior Housing Officer and Team Leader 1 please agree a date for the next meeting. I am flexible with the venue. I can come to any of the venues including my territory at office.

Sam

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Project outcomes for implementation

Wednesday, 10 November, 2010 1:31

From:

"SandF JENFA" <sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com>

[View contact details](#)

To:

"xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx >,xxxxxxxx.gov.uk

Cc:

"Samuel Jenfa" <SamuelJenfa@lookahead.org.uk>

Message contains attachments

2 Files (923KB) | [Download All](#)

- [A Progressive Research Work 11 \(Repaired\).doc](#)
- [Analysis sheetof enquiries.xls](#)

Hi There,

It has been a long while, I have a discusiion on this project with individual.

I need to put in place implementation programme as follows:

Deborah - Workplacement and job opportunity for young people as per our discussion in April 2010.

Gina - You are the only surviving Senior Manager (Assistant Regional Director) within the organisation that can push forward recommendations made on effective joint working with networks of support agency and how the outcome of such joint working will informed the progress the homeless people are making with their support plan. Maybe a small group session from staff at Kent Foyer and two others from your end will provoke further learning based on this project and future usage of your measuring tool(s).

Without testing out any of the above, I cannot hand in my work as it got impactful project. Please help me out. There are lots of benefits from this piece of work. See materials for details. Thanks

RE: Research Update

Friday, 23 July, 2010 14:59

From:

"SandF JENFA" <sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com>

[View contact details](#)

To:

"Christine Brown" <Christine.Brown@xxxx.org.uk>

Cc:

"Gina Rocque-Drayton" <gina.rocque-drayton@xxxx.org.uk>

Message contains attachments

1 File (5KB)

- 

Hi Both,

Sorry it has been a while that I met you for an update. I have come up with a simple measuring tool that can be used to measure progress the your service users are making alongside their support plan.

I will send this to you next week Friday as I have been spending the last two weeks to write on ethic research in relaation to how I have worked with your residents.

The full report is now completed and I don't need to do anything again apart from talking to variuos people (mainly external) on agenda for change.

Next week will be too busy for me with a new job I am starting but I will send email to arrange meeting to discuss the report.

It has been a brilliant services you are providing across the board. There was a good practice (self-harming group) which I think other supported housing can copy from Kent Foyer. Your support plan and policy are the best I have seen in the last 3 years in supported housing. But using a simple internal outcome star measuring tool will give your support

plan and need assessment a great 'sound music' in relation to social inclusion or social capital in my own language.

Christine: I am still waiting for a copy of your need assessment.

Sam

--- On Fri, 25/6/10, Christine Brown <[Christine.Brown@xxxxxx.org.uk](mailto:Christine.Brown@xxxxxx.org.uk)> wrote:

From: Christine Brown <[Christine.Brown@casasupport.org.uk](mailto:Christine.Brown@casasupport.org.uk)>

Subject: RE: Research Update

To: "'SandF JENFA'" <[sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com](mailto:sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com)>

Date: Friday, 25 June, 2010, 13:30

Ok but I will be leaving at 4

Christine Brown

Team Leader

[xxxChristine.Brown@xxx.org.uk](mailto:xxxChristine.Brown@xxx.org.uk)

[www.casasupport.org.uk](http://www.casasupport.org.uk)

**From:** SandF JENFA [<mailto:sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com>]

**Sent:** 25 June 2010 11:22

**To:** Christine Brown

**Subject:** RE: Research Update

Hi Christine,

Let us move this meeting to 3pm at the very latest.

Sam

--- On Tue, 22/6/10, Christine Brown <[Christine.Brown@xxxx.org.uk](mailto:Christine.Brown@xxxx.org.uk)> wrote:

From: Christine Brown <[Christine.Brown@xxxx.org.uk](mailto:Christine.Brown@xxxx.org.uk)>

Subject: RE: Research Update

To: "'SandF JENFA'" <[sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com](mailto:sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com)>

Date: Tuesday, 22 June, 2010, 16:15

Friday is good. I have put you in my diary.

See you then, thanks Christine Brown Team Leader [Christine.Brown@xxxx.org.uk](mailto:Christine.Brown@xxxx.org.uk)

**From:** SandF JENFA [mailto:sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com]

**Sent:** 22 June 2010 16:09

**To:** Christine Brown

**Subject:** RE: Research Update

Hey Christine - Thank you for your response.

Friday should be fine. What about 2pm?

Sam

--- On Tue, 22/6/10, Christine Brown <Christine.Brown@xxxx.org.uk> wrote:

From: Christine Brown <Christine.Brown@xxx.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Research Update

To: "SandF JENFA" <sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com>

Date: Tuesday, 22 June, 2010, 14:54

Hi

Nice to hear from you again.

I am not available on wc 28 June. Is it too late to arrange something for this week? If you are available that would be great.

Regards

Christine

Christine Brown

Team Leader

**From:** SandF JENFA [mailto:sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com]

**Sent:** 22 June 2010 14:41

**To:** Christine Brown

**Subject:** Research Update

Hi Christine,

Since you are the only manager around for now, I would like to arrange a meeting with you, so that I can provide the update and the outcome of the research work conducted at your project 3 months ago.

I have collected support plan and procedure from Gina Rocque - Drayton, one of your London Service Managers. I will work on these document, upon completing amendments on the research report, this week.

Based on the findings, the Swale Borough Council would like to work with you on employment issue, local consultations with young people, intergeneration programme and community-based facilities for young people such sport centre and etc.

Anyway, I am happy to meet you on Monday 28th of June 11am or provide me with alternative date and time.

I would like to meet service users for feedback and agreement on the findings through the house meeting or general forum. Week Commencing 12th of July anytime from 11am to 7pm will be ok for me. We can discuss arrangement in a meeting with you.

Thanks



## **Appendix 4   Feedback from Professional from Supported Housing and Homeless Organisations**

### **RESEARCH PROJECT**

Wednesday, 28 September, 2011 17:34

From:

"Gina Rocque-Drayton" <Gina.Rocque-Drayton@casasupport.org.uk>

[View contact details](#)

To:

"sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com" <sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com>, "P.gibbs@mdx.ac.uk" <P.gibbs@mdx.ac.uk>

Message contains attachments

3 Files (17KB) | Download All

Hi Sam

Thank you for sending me a copy of your research, together with your findings and recommendations. I found your research informative and thought provoking. This is a good outcome tool for promoting economic engagement, health improvement and integration of homeless people into the wider community.

My comments are as follows:

1. I accept your findings for the causes and effects of homelessness on people, this has been a good piece of research
2. The effects of homelessness on well-being, our experience shows that having a roof over your head means that many vulnerable people can start to address their support, health and social needs

3. ASB and how this affects relationships with the wider community, this is at the forefront of all RSLs and an issue which is at the top of the Government's agenda
4. Difficulties people face with engaging with employers
5. Social capital can improve the socio-economic well-being of vulnerable people
6. Agree with the conclusions providing homeless people with opportunities to engage in the labour market, requires basic skills around community, team working, confidence building through social engagement.
7. Your research is relevant and the recommendations and outcome of your research will be useful to our organisation.
8. This is a good outcome tool for promoting economic engagement, health improvement and integration of homeless people into the wider community.

Well done.

**Gina Rocque-Drayton**

Assistant Regional Director for London, Surrey & Sussex  
Casa Support

020 8726 8872

[Gina.Rocque-Drayton@casasupport.org.uk](mailto:Gina.Rocque-Drayton@casasupport.org.uk)

[www.casasupport.org.uk](http://www.casasupport.org.uk)

(part of AmicusHorizon Ltd)

[www.amicushorizon.org.uk](http://www.amicushorizon.org.uk)

Grosvenor House, 125 High Street  
Croydon  
Surrey  
CR0 9XP

RE: Feedback

Saturday, 24 September, 2011 14:00

From:

"Jeremy Swain" <Jeremy.Swain@thamesreach.org.uk>

[Add sender to Contacts](#)

To:

"sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com" <sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com>

Sam:

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the research summary you sent me entitled 'Increasing Social Capital in Supported Housing'. I found it an interesting piece and it obviously resonates with me and the work we are doing here at Thames Reach, albeit with a mostly older age group than the one that you were studying.

Here are a few broader points that I would make:

I think you are entirely right to investigate the development of social capital amongst homeless people. It is clear that the professional support structures we build for vulnerable people are limited and that the people we support have frequently had stripped away the normal structures of families and friends that we take for granted. You pleasingly address the issue of mutuality and reciprocity as I think the sense of shared responsibility and, as usually articulated, the opportunity of 'giving back' something to others - organisations and individuals - is important.

Overall I felt that this was an interesting piece of research which illustrated both the importance of a person-centred approach and its benefits and also the extent to which there is some way further to go before the priorities of the service user become central to the care planning and case management process.

I hope this is of use. I think if you need more feedback from me then it would be best if we met so that I can clarify fully exactly what areas of your work you would like specific comments on.

Best wishes.

Jeremy Swain

## **Appendix 5   Relevant Previous Articles Written on Social Inclusion As Contribution to Research**

On Tue, 11/3/08, Jill Dwyer <*Jill.Dwyer@cih.org*> wrote:

From: Jill Dwyer <*Jill.Dwyer@cih.org*>

Subject: RE: Housing Magazine

To: "SandF JENFA" <*sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com*>

Date: Tuesday, 11 March, 2008, 11:06

Sam,

I have re-written the article somewhat. I needed to keep the word count down and wanted to include one example. (see below)

I hope it reflects your thoughts. If not let me know any changes as soon as possible.

Thanks,

Jill

### **Reconnecting Vulnerable People to the Community**

Sam Jenpha, CIH London Branch, explains how lifelong learning can help vulnerable people in supported housing and registered care projects reconnect to the community.

Lifelong learning encompasses all forms of learning, from formal learning at college or university, to vocational skills acquired in the workplace and informal learning. Many large housing providers have recognised the importance of lifelong learning and promote the employability of their residents through learning and employment projects. Community renewal programmes also offer a range of learning opportunities, which can be tailored to meet the needs of resident leaders and professionals in disadvantaged areas who are seeking to work together to tackle local problems and improve their quality of life. The

concept of active citizens is embedded in these programmes and aims to provide people with the motivation, skills and confidence to speak up for their communities and say what improvements are needed.

If leaders in supported housing see their residents as active citizens, then they should focus on reconnecting them to the wider community through education, both formal and informal, employment and developing their social capital. I see social capital as being developed in four ways. Firstly, through bonding within homogeneous groups of people. Secondly bridging the divide between diverse groups and individuals. Thirdly through bringing groups together to achieve a certain aim. Fourthly to leverage groups who are able to effect change.

To develop social capital amongst clients, supported housing providers need to work in new ways with partners such as local businesses and charities to pursue shared objectives. Thames Reach , for example, provides learning development and employment services to its current residents and other people who have had experience of rough sleeping or homelessness. These services include a job training scheme, which is a nine-month paid training programme within the organisation in functions including IT, finance and administration. The trainees benefit from a good salary and holiday entitlement as well as supervision, mentoring and life coaching, in conjunction with their normal support workers. Over half of the trainees go on to secure paid work after the scheme.

Supporting homeless people and those with special needs should go much further than simply providing a roof over their heads. Providing opportunities for lifelong learning and special needs education in partnership with businesses and other voluntary projects can turn people's lives around. Not only will residents overcome their immediate difficulties within a safe and inclusive environment, but they can learn to become economically active and move towards greater independence.

Jill Dwyer  
Communications and Media Officer  
Chartered Institute of Housing  
Octavia House Westwood Way  
Coventry  
CV4 8JP  
Tel: 02476 851780  
Mob: 07786 716961

---

**From:** SandF JENFA [mailto:sandf.jenfa@btinternet.com]

**Sent:** Mon 3/10/2008 14:28

**To:** Jill Dwyer

**Subject:** Housing Magazine

Hi Jill

Re: Details of Supported Housing Providing Training and Employment Services to their clients:

Thames Reach provides learning development and employment services to their current residents and other people who have had an experience of rough sleeping or homelessness through the following schemes:

Job training scheme - Paid employment training programme for a duration of 9 months service with supported housing work, IT, HR and Finance/Admin Work.

Volunteering Scheme - various activities such as receptionist, admin, befriending and others.

Thames Reach incorporate employment and training opportunity to their support work in terms of helping their clients to enhance soci-economic participation.

We have other Supported Housing Organisations such as Look Ahead Housing and Care Ltd, providing similar employment and training services to the vulnerable homeless people through their learning development team.

## Appendix 6 Report to the management


Gina Rocque – Drayton  
Assistant Regional Director  
Casa Support

125 Croydon High Street

CR0 9PX

Croydon Office

2<sup>nd</sup> April 2011



Social Capital Project  
working with Casa  
Support Ltd

Dear Gina,

Re: Brief Project Report

Please find the outcome of the project as per our discussion.

I also included the impact the project had made to the service in the report.

Many thanks for your support and the comment provided on this project. This is to confirm the agreement we made in October 2007, that I will produce a report on project outcome.

Please note another comprehensive report will follow to show the details of the project and how I derived at the income together with the impact made to the vulnerable people to date.

Yours sincerely

Sam Jenfa

Consultant

Social Capital Project

## ***Management report increasing social capital in supported***

### ***Abstract***

This report outlines how social capital can be maximised for young homeless people at Moonday project through solutions to the findings that emerged from the main research activity and enquiry around health, education, employment and social participation.

Action research methodology was adopted for this project as the outcome of the work will be originated from collaborative enquiries with the practitioners and residents of Supported Housing.

The responses from the participants such as staff, customers from both projects were collated and developed into content analysis and processed or categorised into headings that would enable the identification of source of problem that led to the circumstances of the homeless people in the context of this project. The content analysis of the responses from the participants will be structured in such a way whereby the effect of the homelessness and social deprivation can be measured.

As a result of the findings, this project developed solution on how effect of homelessness can be resolved by focusing on how support workers from Moonday project should work with network of support agencies and thereby, to share knowledge concerning the young people. This report also established how professional can work together in a community of practice in order to support young people to engage with activities that would enhance their livings.

The solution provided for resolving the findings also involved a design of outcome star where young people can easily measure the progress they have made over 6 months and through which they will be able to set objectives according to the areas of their need. A



traffic light was also designed to assist young people to gauge their progression on the areas of their need the action that would enable them to achieve their aspiration.

The solutions provided by this project indeed responded to the questions raised for this paper and as such confirmed that social capital can be maximised for young homeless people in supported through effective support model that will enable the young people to , partnership work with specialist agencies to engage young people in education and employment. The solution below also included involvement of young people on new initiatives in the community through consultation. Also for the Turnaround Project to work with Local Authority in a way where resources that enable would enable young people to engage in leisure activities, should be provided.

The outcome of this project emerged from the findings based from the research enquiries made with young people from Moonday project. The action research methodology was applied and the responses from were analysed through content analysis.

The solutions were made to the following key findings:

- Effect of homelessness on the health of young people due to breakdown of relationship, family structure, job loss, sexual orientation and mental health problems.
- Young people being denied access to job due to the past behaviour of previous tenants from Moonday Supported Housing project. The findings from the research enquiry noted what young people and their workers said about how the employers had denied young homeless people access to employment for using the address of the project.
- It was also discovered through the enquiry that some young homeless people deliberately ignored the prospect of securing a paid job due to welfare benefits trap and low self-esteem created as a result of their homelessness.

- Young people did not see how education and training can make a significant contribution to skills development and opportunity for them to compete in labour market in future.
- The disintegration of young people from the mainstream community in terms of providing them with the resources that will support them access to leisure activities as well as encouraging them to part with the local consultation and development of their community.
- Some young people retained connection with their family while some cannot easily amend the breakdown of their relationship.

Recommendation also made for the support service for young service to be remodelled as social capital offered service within the following quadrant – Health Impact, Employment, Education & Training Community Participation.

### ***1.1 Solution on the effect of the homelessness on health of the young people through social capital***

The findings of this project confirmed how the health of young homeless people was significantly affected as a result of sleeping rough. The research findings also confirmed how the mental health of homeless deteriorated as result of homelessness that led to loss of confidence, trust and disconnection from wider community. Hence, this project recommended how social capital can be maximised to improve the well-being of young people following the effects of homelessness on their health.

The discussion will emerge from the perspective of how the physical and emotional well-being of a young or vulnerable person can be sustained in the areas of health by engaging with networks of support agency and communication with a trusted person or group of people who are not professionals.

Therefore, the first aspect to discuss is using the network of support agencies to achieve a sustained well-being of the homelessness young person in the areas of health being affected by their previous experience or the damage caused by homelessness.

In this case, different types of models of network of support agencies, available to young homeless people and other vulnerable homeless people in supported housing, can be discussed as follows.

**Structured support network model:** This type of support network model comprises agencies that may include housing support professionals of any grade as well as health specialists consisting of a psychiatrist, community practice nurse and care coordinator. This is a simple support network model that entails combination of two or more professionals from different backgrounds to support a vulnerable person to achieve their goals and aspirations on issues relevant to their health. As discussed in Chapter 3.3 of this project report, the benefit of a group of people made up of professionals, friends and family coming together to support the well-being of vulnerable people could be significant as everyone who is weak depends on other people to support them. Five benefits of social networks on the health of vulnerable people clarified through the work of Berkman and Syme (1979) are highlighted in Chapter 3 of the main project report and they can be summarised as social support, social influence, social engagement, person-to-person contact and access to resources and material goods.

The pathways identified above as benefits of social networks will transform in the life of a vulnerable person through a structural support from agencies. Figure A1,3 below, shows the way in which people who need help go into support service provider to receive help around their problems and independent living skills.

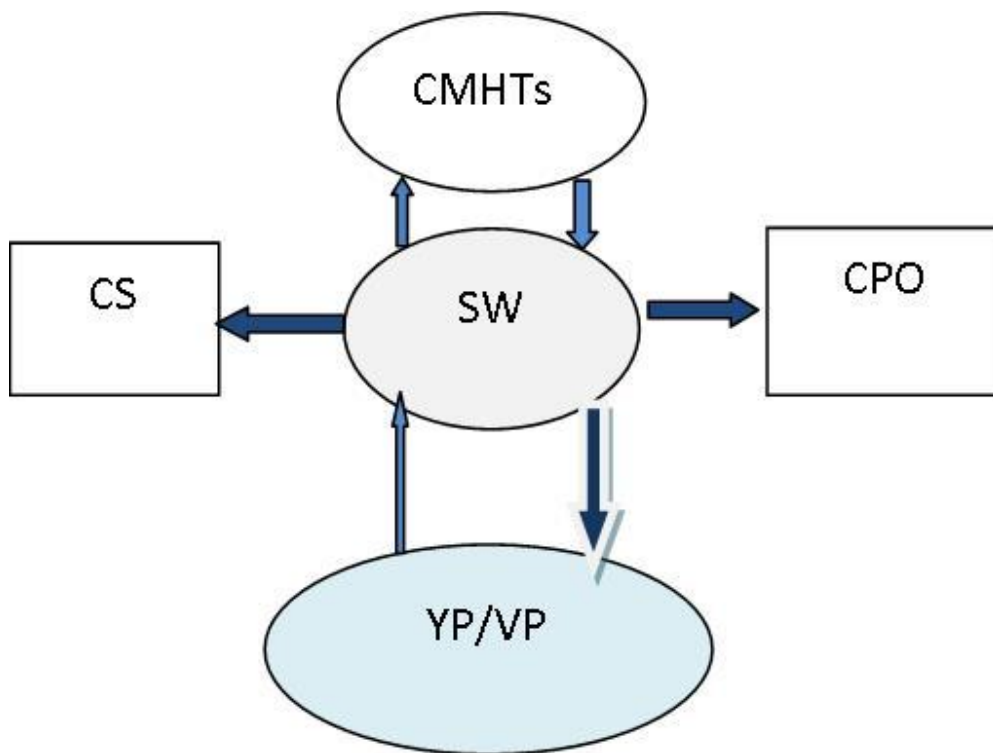
Without going into the clinical and complex nature of this model of support network, we may say that the agencies will engage young or vulnerable homeless people within a commonly acceptable framework that will translate the objectives or the goals into action. The health specialists refer to the framework for specifying goals and managing associated risks for vulnerable people as a ‘care plan’, while the housing support staff named their framework tool a ‘support plan’.

In terms of supporting the goals of the vulnerable person in relation to their health, each of the agencies must feed the agreed action from the joint meeting between the professionals and the vulnerable person into their framework. Each party must have clear tasks to follow up within stated deadlines.

All parties are to fulfil the areas of tasks allocated to them within clearly defined deadlines. However, lack of clarity of roles may prevent the objectives set being achieved.

The support staff plays a dual role when it comes to supporting vulnerable persons as they spend more time with them than their other external colleagues. Hence, the role of support workers within the community of practice should be:

- To act as the vector of support to vulnerable young homeless people until they reach a level when such direction is no longer required (see Figure A1 below);
- To maintain an empowerment role in terms of equipping them with the living skills required to achieve tasks identified through their agreed care or support plan; and
- To link or facilitate external support services such as alcohol and substance awareness programmes and re-housing applications for permanent housing following provision of life skills programmes and others.



**Figure A6.1 Network of Support Agencies**

Figure A6.1 shows the link between CMHTs and other health professionals and housing SW and young people including other vulnerable homeless people (YP/VP). CS stands for community-based services and the arrows that link SW and YP/VP illustrate how Housing Support Workers are empowering young people with the necessary living skills to access the community services. CPO stands for care plan objectives set by community mental health for young people or any vulnerable person to achieve within the care plan programme.

Apart from clarity of roles between the network of support agencies, communication and precision are the two key benefits that make this type of network of support agency important to the professionals that use and exchange information about the person they are all working together to support. A structured liaison meeting is the medium through which interagency groups from different backgrounds and with different levels of experience communicate with one another. Precision means that the group should operate

within clear boundaries or terms of reference that will enable easy-to-follow, unambiguous recommendations.

The process tool for maintaining effective communication and precision should be embedded in:

- Regular structured meetings – such as a Care Plan Approach meeting for young homeless people on enhanced CPA or on CMHTs’ register – with frontline support workers to be invited to attend (the progress review meeting) and to provide on the action plan they are working on with the young person.
- Interagency meetings should take place to give updates of general issues with the young person as part of best practice.
- Yearly review of terms of reference and information sharing protocols should exist between all the agencies connected to any other supported housing working with the homeless people.

In effect, the network of support agencies should work as a community of practice to ensure quality, effective networking among professionals and the sharing of knowledge.

The authors of the community of practice describe it as:

A set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991: 98).

Lave and Wenger were simply talking about a sort of learning in which newcomers engage in a situation learning that cannot be separated from the community of practice without the full legitimate participation of old members of the community. Without drifting away from the focus of this chapter, the work of Lave and Wenger can be used to shape how support agencies with common interests, beliefs and notions of trust, should come together to solve the social, physical and emotional problems of young people in the

community through the sharing of information and knowledge from the perspective of different experiences and specialisms.

Specialist agency workers and housing support staff should work together to find solutions to the problems of vulnerable homeless people through learning in a legitimate periphery participation. As Lave and Wenger have shown, learning and working through participation in group and engagement with the 'daily round' can make the outcome of the interagency work informative and of interest. The characteristics of communities of practice vary. Some have names, many do not. Some communities of practice are quite formal in organisations; others are very fluid and informal. However, Wenger stated that

Members are brought together by joining in common activities and by what they have learned through their mutual engagement in these activities (Wenger, 1998: 73).

It can be emphasised further that mutuality is a key aspect of engagement in any interagency or social partnership work that exists between staff from the supported housing sector and external colleagues from either social services, CMHT (both on the level of care coordinator) and NHS staff such as community practice nurses (from a social care perspective), drug & alcohol project and localised services that include local education and employment project. The concept of mutuality is of course crucial to social capital – that is, it relates to reciprocity. Wenger explains that practice exists because people engage in actions, the meanings of which they have to negotiate with each other. Therefore, he states that practice is not to be found in books or tools (although it may involve many kinds of artefacts). Practice is to be found in a community 'and the relations of mutual engagement by which they can do whatever they do' (Wenger 1998: 73).

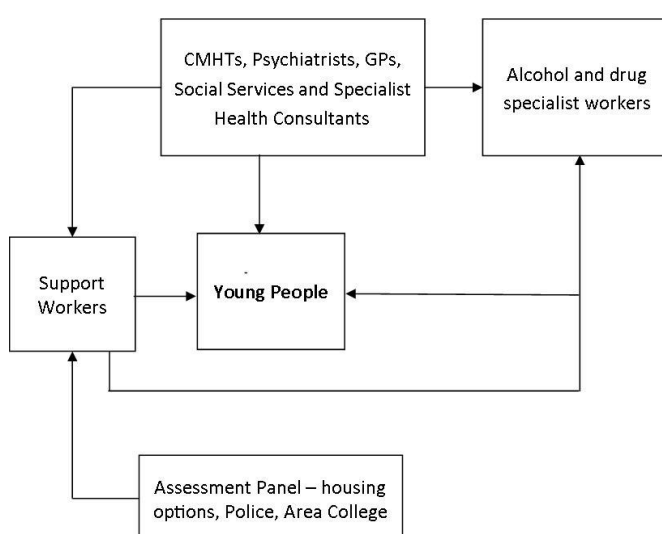
The work of Lave and Wenger was introduced into this research work to establish that the support agency workers and support workers of Supported Housing Ltd should

maintain effective networking through the rules of common ground to generate good practice, flow of language, common interest, relationships and group dynamism in relation to the sharing of new knowledge from participants in support of the well-being of young people.

It should be noted that old ideas and static knowledge cannot be used to resolve the well-being of vulnerable young homeless people, as the practitioners need to act to incorporate a new policy agenda, change of environment and changes to the need of the vulnerable people. This is what Star (1995) referred to as dynamism in relation to the social distribution of the knowledge in the group. Star points out:

Over a period of time, as the group's work progresses, the members will learn different things at different paces'. Star said further that, 'obviously there will be members of the group in the same community who have specialised knowledge in certain aspects, that is, they are 'gurus' (Star, 1995:35).

This is much related to bridging social capital, where members of the group or associations of people with a common interest will be able to consult others for help, but, as time passes, the social distribution of the knowledge will shift.



**Figure A6.2 Schematic diagram of support**



Figure A6.2 presents a diagram of the relationships between key support workers facilitating services to the young people through working with health professionals (such as CMHT, psychiatrists, medical consultants and social services), alcohol and drug agencies, and housing assessment panels (such as Borough Housing Options), the police and the local college. The essence of joint working between support workers and the external agencies listed in Figure A6.2 above was to maximise the housing support-related services. The diagram shows how professionals can work together in a network of support to deliver quality services to homeless people.

This chapter has established the problem of homeless people and shown that increasing social capital will play a major role in enhancing their health and well-being. Figure A6.1 shows how vulnerable homeless people in supported housing environment are receiving support from their support worker and network of support agencies.

Putnam established one of the advantages of social capital as

features of social life – networks, norms, and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives (Putnam 1995: 664–665).

Putnam identified ‘participants’ instead of ‘society’ as the beneficiaries of social capital. The two key points from Putnam on social capital and relationship in the community referred to *associational life* and *dialogue*; these can be analysed as follows:

Associational life relates to the act of joining and being regularly involved in organised groups, which has a very significant impact on individual health and well-being.

Actions to take forward as recommendations include:

- Support workers should continue to have a mutual engagement with the network of support agencies and ensure that their action plan is reflected in the support plan of the young person they are working with
- Support workers should also feedback the areas of the action plan they are coordinating with the young person to specialist workers like care coordinators
- Key support workers should continue to take action from CPA meetings with community practice nurses or care coordinators and consultants, and incorporate it into the support plan, and
- Support Workers should give feedback to care coordinators and community practice nurses at CPA review meetings for the purpose of knowledge sharing and updating how the young person is progressing with the support plan objectives.
- Support worker to hold case management meetings once a month to present a case report of their key service users to the entire staff group and thereby receive feedback from internal colleagues as part of best practice
- To review the support plan in such a way that young homeless people can understand the objectives and their implementation through outcome star measurement and the ladder of change. The new service model to embrace on the key core element of the service such as – health support, employment, training and education, tenancy management, community and capacity inclusion and family/friend networks.

## **Employment**

Employment is one of the key exclusion issues identified in this research, and a proposal was made to Sunnyside Town Council to work with the Moonday project so as to reduce the skills deficit and the difficulties young people have in competing for job opportunities like any other person in the community. To this end, agreement was made with Sunnyside Town Council to improve the image of young people through work placements opportunities. The forward plan is that:

Sunnyside Town Council will invest resources into the economic engagement of young people through work placements;

- Sunnyside Town Council will take a lead through a joint working approach with Moonday project to promote the work placements and employment opportunities project available for young people to local businesses in the borough. Sunnyside Town Council will use the outcome of the in-house work placement programme provided to the young people to justify changes in their attitude towards work and the benefit to the businesses as well as to the community. Steger (2000) made it known that consumption is used partly for the development of human capital in terms of education and health, which increases the productivity of labour that makes a positive contribution to output, which is revealed on the macroeconomic level.

The above arrangement is justifiable as an investment in young or homeless people will improve their skills and increase their living capacity through earnings from work. This is why there is a focus on human capital connected to the economic behaviour of individuals, particularly on the way in which their accumulation of knowledge and skills enables them to increase their productivity and their earnings. In so doing they increase the productivity and wealth of the societies in which they live. Therefore, it is reasonable to negotiate with policy makers, funders of social skills and employers that an investment in knowledge and skills can about individual and collective economic returns. This can be done through formal and informal learning programmes.

The above arrangement with Sunnyside Town Council clearly identified the relationship between employability and social capital, as employment skills, social skills, practice and knowledge can be gained through relationships within a network group. Hence social capital focuses on networks: the relationships within and between them, and the norms which govern these relationships. However, it should be noted that this does not necessarily entail a specific value position on the part of those who use it as an analytic

device due to its strong normative connotations, clarifying that trusting relationships are good for social cohesion and for economic success (Leadbeater, 1999). In this case, it can be argued that social capital must form a healthy and balanced relationship through the representation of strong and weak ties. Weak ties without a mixture of stronger ties cannot transform the access of vulnerable or less privileged people to the benefits of their wider participation in society. At the same time, it can be argued that strong ties can also be dysfunctional, excluding information and reducing the capacity for innovation (Granovetter, 1973). There can be negative normative associations as well as positive ones, such that some networks embody the 'dark side' of social capital, to the detriment of the wider society and even of its own members.

Apart from encouraging the local borough to support young people with job placements, a recommendation was made to staff to support their tenants to engage in the labour market through:

- Collaboration work with job centres around work placement schemes, training and employment workshops;
- Directing tenants to employment agencies for work placements with employers; and
- Fostering partnership work with voluntary organisations that can provide young people with placements for experience.

### **1.3 Education**

The research findings established that 6 out of 17 people were not interested in going to college due to their health condition and benefit claim. Hence, part of the support service provision to young people should focus on empowering young people on either formal or

informal learning at the local college. Getting young people into full-time or part-time college should be encouraged by the Moonday project as some young people said that they are not interested in studies at the moment because they do not want their benefits to be affected. Moonday project should continue to instil confidence to these young people that their benefits cannot be affected instantly. They need to encourage them that there will be no need for them to rely on state benefits once they are able to secure a well-paid job through enhancement of skills from their college or education programme. The support staff needs to use support plans to encourage hard-to-engage young people to engage in education. They need to reassure them that adequate educational attainment will add to their high level of civic engagement and a better perception of their local area.

The Brainfield College, as a provider of community education service, should work more closely with businesses or other homeless projects in the local community to find out the special interests of the individuals, which may be skills valuable to the employer market and that might make vulnerable people able to compete in that market. For example, some vulnerable young people with mental health problems might need a specialist education service in order to engage in the labour market. Having such opportunities made available to these young people might give them the confidence necessary to get involved in the labour market.

It should be noted that the educational process starts in school, which produce more informed individuals who promote social interactions and share social responsibilities. Educated individuals have a better understanding of the positive impacts on society of associational activities and collective action than do those with less education (Rupasingha et al., 2006). It is widely believed that education generates significant positive externalities and improves overall productivity in the economy.

### ***Improving social participation***

A recommendation has been made as a result of this project that Sunnyside Town Council should help within their financial resources to increase social amenities for young people in Rise and Happyside County. Young people, as highlighted above, said that they want more leisure activities such as sports grounds, opportunity for free dance classes and support with discounted gym memberships. Young people said that they cannot afford the membership fees of £5.00 currently in place. Hence, the Borough Council gave their initial agreement to look into social amenities for young people and a consultation forum will be organised with the young people at the Moonday project to get their interest on board. The young people said that the community has been taking their opinion and voices for granted.

All the young people said that they would like to be consulted on local agenda issues so that their views can be represented in decision making. Network skills provided by support workers will prepare them for this aspect of community integration. In effect, increasing social capital through network skills will give young homeless people the opportunity to be linked into the wider society or community. Generally, the Borough Council will take this on board and find a way of getting the young adults involved in local community discussion.

Inviting vulnerable young homeless people (and other young people) to community consultations is a form of social capital where people from different groups or networks come together to engage in a dialogue to find solutions to problems through their common objectives and shared vision. This can be guaranteed through the Council, who will work to invite young people to the forum to discuss local agendas or initiatives. In order for this to take place, Sunnyside Town Council has promised to visit the young people's project and establish the best way to involve young people in local initiatives (see Appendix 3 for minutes of the implementation meeting with the Council). The core values and resources

are embedded in the shared vision with an obligation to achieve a common objective that is central to the collective groups or networks of people. Narayan and Pritchett argued that people should work together as cohesive groups in order to achieve their objectives through rules and obligations that are embedded in social capital (Narayan and Pritchett, 1997). In effect, Narayan and Pritchett suggests that ‘the rules, norms, obligations, reciprocity and trust embedded in social relations, social structures and society’s institutional arrangements ... enable members to achieve their individual and community objectives’ (Narayan & Pritchett, 1997).

Moreover, the young people said that they would also like to have community dialogue with older adults. This could take place through common local consultation with the Council or through organising an intergenerational programme. This is recommendation was put forward to the Council as it provides learning and understanding between all ages. Again, social capital of this form could facilitate intimacy and attachment between all ages, not only for relationships that traditionally are thought of as intimate (e.g., between partners or between parents and children) but for more extended ties that produce relationships that are solid at a community level, wherein individuals feel strong bonds and attachment to places.

***The benefits of creating an acceptable community to the young people***

Bringing all the above recommendations into reality for the young people at Supported Housing Moonday Project and Rise and Happyside County in general will add to the economic, physical and social well-being of those young people in supported or public sector accommodation. Implementing the above agenda for change will reduce crime and also facilitate the connection of young people to the wider community.

Engaging young people in community dialogue will give them an opportunity to carry out community work as active citizens. It will give them a sense of belonging and clarify their responsibilities, such as turning away from criminal activities.

Involving young people in local consultation will give them the opportunity to integrate into their wider community and their input on local agenda will give indication of their engagement in civic activities.

Getting young people to work as well as to pursue further education will give them meaningful daytime activities.

This project made a recommendation to Moonday project to consider the idea of modelling their service to young homeless people based on social inclusion type and thereby to offer the tenants with opportunity to have choice and control over their support plan. Hence, Moonday project will review their support plan in form of outcome measuring star in order to achieve person-centred support plan.

It was also suggested to Moonday project to add the quality of support plan in a person-centred approach, education, work, community/social engagement of the tenants as part of their key performance indicators with the data to be collated on a quarterly basis. The inclusion of the above data to the KPIs will improve the quality of the service and provide young people with opportunity to be part of wider community.

## **Impact of the Outcomes**

Physical Manifestation of This Project –

**Employment:** This project led to increase in numbers of young people at Moonday project engaging with paid and unpaid job as a result of recommendation made to the organisation, to add the statistics of people engaging with labour market to their key performance



indicators. During the research enquiries, about two people were on a paid job but now the visit to the project in March 2011, confirmed that about 6 people entered into part-time job, two people entered full-time job while 9 people entered voluntary role. However, the national economic predicament means that the Borough Council could not support the employment initiative programme as proposed in a meeting with them in March 2010. The Borough went through a comprehensive saving review strategy that led to savings of £40 million to be made over 5 years from 2010 to 2015. This project intervention recommended that the project should work closely with the external agencies such as specialist employment agencies and local education and training, as outlined in Chapter 8 of this report in order to maximise employment opportunity for the young people in the borough. It was further suggested that the supported housing organisation should review their service specification to reflect health and social inclusion service. In effect, the organisation took onboard the above suggestions and through which, they created employment team within the service, to work with the support workers. The newly employment initiative programme for young people was set up under a team of staff known as Integrated Employment and Social Inclusion Worker. The employment team are working with the local job centre and Brainfield education. The staff also sign posted young people to local recruitment agencies for support. The new core element of the service at Moonday project are – health support, employment, training and education, tenancy management, community involvement and capacity inclusion and family/friend networks.

The core element of the service

**Learning engagement:** The research findings highlighted that 6 young people were in education during the visit to the Moonday Project in March 2010. However, a visit to the

service in March 2011, confirmed a record of 15 people young people now engaging with both formal and informal learning at the local college and Trust Training Project.

Although, the project said that this is still very low in terms of their performance target but they will continue to work hard with young people in this area of support service.

The Borough Council are now inviting a representative from the Moonday project to local discussion as from August 2010. The representative from the project is also a member of Central Resident Committee of the organisation.

**Outcome Measuring Tools:** During the project enquiries, the majority of Supported Housing staff were not happy using measuring tools known as distance travel and the recovery model star. Hence, basic and easy-to-assimilate measuring tools was devised as in Appendix 1 where the model was tested with one of the tenants who volunteered to use the model to assess their current condition.

The tool was implemented with the tenant over two occasions. The first occasion took place in June 2010 where the tenant and their Housing Support Worker were both observed working with the outcome measurement star. The tenant reflect on their current circumstance to develop objectives in each specific topic of support plan such as health, work, confidence, social networks, addiction, hope & trust and housing.

The tenant plotted their outcome star that shows non-linear picture to demonstrate progress around their needs. The non-linear picture or diagram is an indication of how certain aspect of someone's life need improvement. Objectives were set in the support plan for another 6 months. The review took place in December to changes around the well-being of the tenant in the quadrant of the outcome measuring tools highlighted in Appendix 1. The feedback from the tenant around the reliability of the measuring tools was very positive. The tenant said that it was so easy for them to engage with the tools.

The outcome measuring tools and traffic light shown in Appendix 1 were drawn from the topics and objectives areas of the support plan being used by Supported Housing Ltd

The red light indicates when the vulnerable homeless people moved into the accommodation-based service for help. The people need more than just housing at the red stage due to the various effect of homelessness on their health that need to be resolved in order to enhance a basic or standard living condition. This can be linked to what Third and Yanetta (2000) and Fitzpatrick, Kemp and Klinker (2000) call social circumstance beyond the simple need for shelter. The element of care and support funding by the government is to cater for the social and health needs of people through partnership work between agencies.

The amber light symbolises the stage at which vulnerable people are getting ready to engage with the service or support provided by the network of agencies.

The green light is at the stage where vulnerable people have met all their expectations or objectives around well-being through structural support from their support network. They are at the stage where they can engage shoulder-to-shoulder with anyone in the community.

Interagency work between specialist agencies and Housing Support Workers plays a significant role in the progress homeless people are making on their well-being. Therefore, this project report will make a strong recommendation for Supported Housing Ltd and any other support service providers to adopt the above measuring tools or any other easy-to-follow sample so as to monitor the progress their service users are making on their well-being.

The homeless people should be empowered to be able to use the above tools in measuring the progression of their own well-being.

In conclusion, this chapter highlights how a network of specialist support agencies and staff from supported housing are able to make a difference to the lives of vulnerable people through social capital. This chapter also clarifies how the professionals support the well-being of vulnerable homeless people through common objectives, partnership agreements (otherwise known as service level agreements), sharing of working knowledge, best practice and understanding. This was what Ostrom referred to in his work on collective action and the evolution of social norms, in which he described social capital as simply the shared knowledge, understanding, norms, rules and expectations about patterns of interactions that groups of individuals bring to a recurrent activity (Ostrom, 2000). Therefore, it is possible, and to greater extent, that social capital can address the effect of homelessness on the lives of vulnerable people and make significant a contribution to their well-being.

Supported Housing Ltd took on board the key recommendations made on employment opportunities for young people by directing them to Jobcentre Plus, recruitment consultants, charity shops and direct contact with employers. Support workers assisted the homeless people to engage with their employment issues by using outcome star and support planning tools (model) to identify clear objectives or actions that will enable them to develop skills and experience in paid and unpaid work. The supported project declared that the simplified outcome star model which is different from generic version known across the sector, enables their residents or tenants to have more insight to their support needs and as such, able to set up their objectives or activities that would enable them to address their problems in a person-centred thinking.

The person-centred thinking gives the tenants of supported housing opportunity to set goals and develop a plan that identifies the services and supports they want and need and who will provide these services. The plan builds on an individual strengths, interests and talents, and it targets assistance to achieve specific results in the person's life.

The supported housing project confirmed that the person-centred approach has been motivating individuals with support needs to live more meaningful, fulfilling lives by increasing choice and control.

The staff identified that the service or supported housing project has given their tenants allocated budget to cater for group for personal activities and group events in the community. They said they said the allocated budget on individuals activities are linked to the key objectives in their support plan (outcome star support model identified in the recommended chapter).

The team leader suggested that it would be useful to look at changing the life skills expenditure to social inclusion budget as it gives opportunity for their tenants to connect to the wider society such as cinema, amusement park and gym. Changing life skills budget to social inclusion or social capital budget will enable tenants or homeless people to take ownership of activities in their support plan and to resolve social exclusion issues.

Generally, support plans were reviewed for all the participants that took part in the interview, and the team leader reported that the implementation of the recommendations, including those regarding education, employment, social network, confidence building, trust and management had made an impact on the lives of the young people.

The team leader said that the recommendations made from the project enquiries were embedded into support plan in conjunction with the outcome star to monitor the

progress of the homeless people in all areas of their needs and well-being. The team leader stated that:

Our tenants are making wonderful improvement in their life, many of them are now showing interest in getting paid and unpaid job, and some are spending their day engaging in the meaningful activities.

The team leader also said that all these came back as a result of support workers making good efforts to connect tenants to services through the structured support network model recommended.

The team leader provided evidence of how support workers supported tenants in the community through working with other partners in a structured approach that identified:

- The needs of the homeless young person and how the effect of homelessness on health can be resolved;
- Skills and capacity building that will motivate the socio-economic engagement of young people; and
- Activities and resources available in the community so as to integrate young socially excluded people into the wider community.

In effect, support workers are working through a structured approach with all the agencies mentioned in Chapter 1 of the outcome of such as specialist health workers, education and the Council housing department to support young people to sustain healthy living, to enhance their living skills and to gain employment and social skills. This is what Berkman and Syme (1979) clarified as the benefit of social networks to vulnerable people and the pertinent need to promote social networks through at least five primary pathways: (1) from provision of social support, (2) social influence, (3) social engagement, (4) person-to-person contact, and (5) access to resources and material goods.

Support Workers also said that their tenants have been able to use the outcome star model in Appendix 1 to see how they are progressing with their life skills. They said that one of their tenants was able to measure improvement with their lifestyle and how they are making link to the community, friends, network of support and families.

One support worker also stated in an informal feedback meeting carried out in June 2010, that he was able to use the charts in Figures 1 and 2 to demonstrate to the tenants how the network of support agencies are working together to support the well-being of the tenants in supported housing. Support worker said further that the tenant in question acknowledged how was being valued by people working with him and as a result, he started to engage with the support service in a positive pathway.

Support workers also connect young people to the wider community through their participation at local events. One worker interviewed said that the participation of young people at free local events strengthened their networking capacity and social engagements.

Anti-Social Behaviour: The service confirmed that anti-social behaviour reduced significantly with the new tenants and they also said that they look forward to receiving positive feedback from local community when the service moved to its previous base.

### **Traffic Light and Recovery Star**

The 'traffic light' was tested at Moonday project and this is to establish the benefit of a simplified outcome star recommended in this project. The traffic light was devised as a useful tool to be used in conjunction with the outcome star to measure how tenants are progressing with their support needs through engagement with their key support worker and network of support agencies. The traffic light symbolised:

- When tenants are not ready to engage with the community-based services

- The amber symbolised they are ready to engage with the community-based services through network of support agencies
- When the tenants are fully engaging with the services with consistent improvement with their well-being.

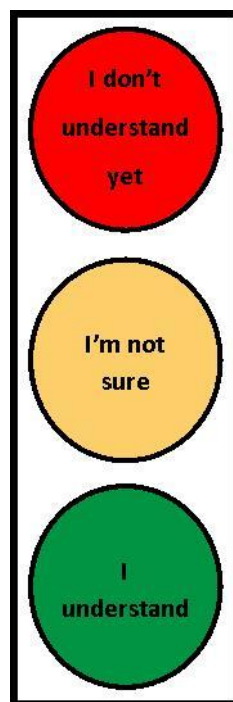


Figure A6.3 Traffic Light system

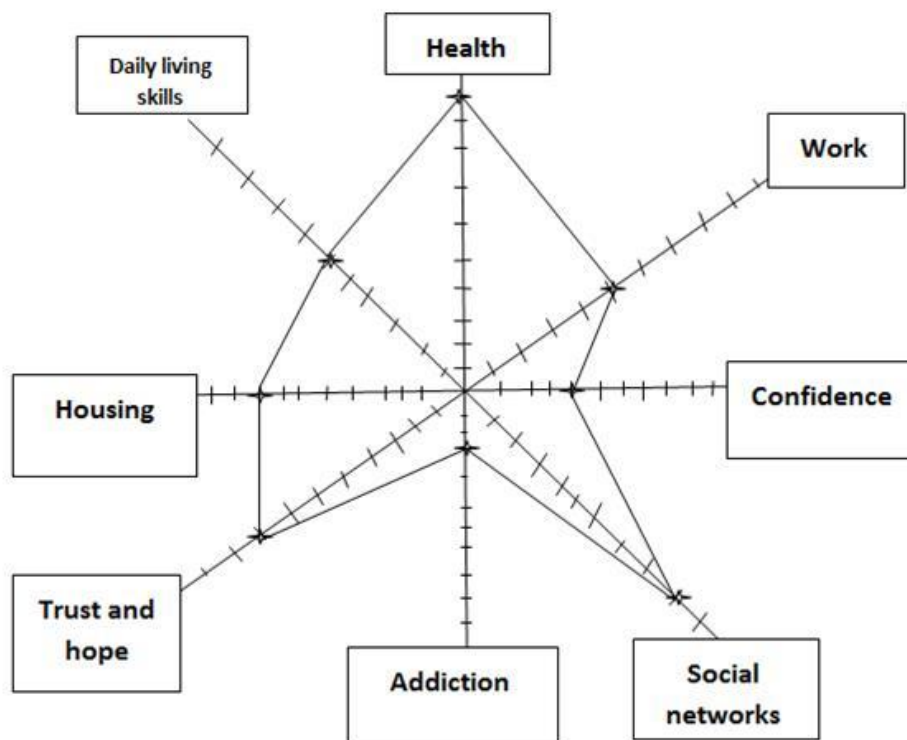
Table A6.1

Topic areas for homeless person or resident to achieve	Objectives – Actions to promote independence, skills and well-being	Possible scores – Can use the example of traffic light for scoring system
DAILY LIVING SKILLS	Budgeting and debts Benefit claims Cooking and food storage Laundry and cleaning	Red light: 0 – I don't understand how to work out the actions. 1 to 2 – Let me be on my own, I don't need help. Amber light: 3 to 4: I am not sure; I need someone else to do all these for me.



HEALTH	Physical health needs Mental health needs Using local health facilities Visiting consultant/specialist	5 to 6: I am making a difference with my skills. Green light: 7 to 8 – High esteem and evidence of achieving objectives. 9 to 10 – Can do things without any help from staff and co-residents.  To follow the scoring system identified above.
HOUSING	Living with other customers Health and safety in the property Support to address/resolve/prevent breaches of tenancy Planning for move-on/ accessing other housing	To follow the scoring system identified above.
EMPLOYMENT/ TRAINING OR USE OF LEISURE TIME	Current situation and future aims Access to education and career service Structured daytime activities	To follow the scoring system identified above.
PERSONAL	Social skills and personal support networks Coping with personal difficulties / problems Drug and alcohol use Personal safety in the community	To follow the scoring system identified above.

This is a typical example of how a tenant demonstrated outcome star to measure changes being made to their life over a period of time according to the chart below.



**Figure A6.4: Star chart showing changes to life**

The overall outcome star measurement can be interpreted in the form of a contour.

In a visit to the project in June 2010, a tenant volunteered to use the outcome model chart/star with their Housing Support Worker to measure their current condition and how they will make progress with their well-being through engagement with health, tenancy and socio-economic activities.

The tenants reflected on their current condition in the following ways under the quadrants of:

Health – Thought they were mentally and physically sound through support they had received from their GP, Community Practice Nurse, Psychiatrist Consultant, Housing Support Worker and Drug Counsellor. They said that they were on green light with the

score of 9 points. The tenant told their Housing Support Worker that they did not need to develop support plan on health.

Work - The tenant currently attending a college programme on hairdressing. Thought that the outcome of their NVQ level 3 should give them pathway to employment. They put themselves down on amber light with 5 points. They said that they had missed going to college on a stressful day due to pressure of course work. Hence, developed support on coping with the college.

Daily living skills – Start taking responsibility in prioritising bills, cleaning and washing. But still need support on healthy eating and cooking as opposed to take away food. The tenant put themselves on amber light with 6 points and developed on healthy living by attending group programme organised in the project around health and diet.

Confidence - Still working on their esteem as a result of the effect of behaviour of the other they had badly treated by their parents. The low esteem also occasionally affecting their progress with their course of work. They want more input with their confidence building from their Housing Support Worker. Housing Support Worker will work with the tenant and external agency on how to get out of their low esteem. The tenant put themselves down red light with 4 points. The Housing Support Worker did not agree with the tenant's scoring and suggested that the tenant should be someone moving to green light with 7 point given their achievement with college work and their engagement with community serves. However, it was the tenant's point that was plotted on the outcome star tool.

Housing – The tenant said that had not received warning letter due to noise nuisance. Also they had not received arrears letter for the last 8 months. They bid for housing opportunity through home search weekly. They said that they had deserved to be

on green light with 8 points. They would like to continue to bid for new house as action (objective) in their support plan.

Hope and Trust: Very slow at trusting people around them. It took the tenant 4 months to eventually engage with their support worker and network of support agencies. The tenant said that they had started believing that they can achieve their dream and aspiration. Tenant put themselves down as green light with 8 points.

Addiction: They said that they had improved considerably on drug dependency through support on substance use counselling. However, they said they would like to shift from addiction to hoarding unnecessary electronic gadgets in their flat. They perceived this as a big problem and it has been very difficult to follow action point in this area. Tenant put themselves down as red light with 3 points.

Social Networks: Engaging very well with new connection in the community, making friends at college, gym and picture. But still need support on family mediation in order to improve relationship with the family. Engaging very well with network of support agencies. Well connected to bank, social group and others. Tenant put themselves down as green with 9 points.

6 months later, Housing Support Worker reviewed the tenant's support plan and their progress in each aspect of the objective noted as:

- Health – Reduced to amber with 6 point as the tenant had an episode of relapse.
- Work – Secured a work experience placement and made progression to green with 8 point.

- Daily living skills – Met the objective set on cooking and there was a shift with the traffic light from amber to green with 10 points.
- Confidence building – Positively engaged with the action point on improving self-esteem by working with an instructor and became more confidence in taking up challenges. There was a shift in traffic light from red to amber with 6 points.
- Housing - No issue, continue to bid for property with a strong possibility of receiving an offer of accommodation within the next 6 months. Tenant put themselves down as green with 10 points
- Hope and Trust – Tenant continue to hope for the fulfilment of their dreams. Hence tenant remains on green light with 8 points.
- Addiction: Still no improvement in this area and remains on the same traffic light (red) with 3 points.
- Social network: Completely moved away from the old group and continue to maintain network groups around health, gym, education & employment, family and relatives. Still on green light with 10 points.

Conclusion: This report demonstrated that the physical and emotional health of the young people can be enhanced through network of support agencies. The outcome star and support plan model also provided staff with the new direction of working with vulnerable homeless people with person-centred approach. It then means that young people have choice and control over the action plan, activities and how they want to receive support.

This report also established that engagement of young people with education, employment and integration into the wider community can make contribution to their well-being from the perspective of socio-economic engagement.

### **Summary Template of the Project Activities**

Research enquiries were carried out across two schemes by the same organisation known as Supported Housing Ltd, namely, the ex-offender service (also known as the Turnaround Project) and young people service (known in this project as Moonday project).

The project activities focused on the young people service and the outcome of the project in terms of the aims identified above was be based on Supported Housing – Moonday project, and the recommendations and implementation programme on an agenda for future change will entail joint working between myself as a consultant, the Supported Housing management team and Sunnyside Town Council. Hence, the project sought to address the problems identified (from the project aims) through:

- Healthy living promotion as a result of joint working between support workers and specialist workers;
- Social skills and support that will entail helping young people to engage with other people in the community;
- Improving employment opportunities for young homeless people in supported housing through the provision of work placements to be provided by Sunnyside Town Council and in conjunction with Brainfield College to start with, but with the aim of orchestrating businesses to sign up for this programme in future;
- Creating an acceptable environment for young homeless people through consultation on local community initiatives to be supported by Sunnyside Town Council and the intergenerational pilot scheme. Prior to the project enquiry or interviews with staff and residents of supported housing in Sunnyside Town Council, those young homeless people interviewed said that they had been

marginalised as nobody wanted to listen to them. They said that they wanted the community to recognise their voice by providing them with consultation on any local or community agenda; and

- Reviewing the support plan and outcome measuring tools – encompassing health improvement, employment, education and training, independent living skills, self-care, hygiene and responsibility, social networks, family relationships, self-confidence, hope and trust, behaviour and living in the community, managing tenancy, and financial management – in order to ensure that social capital is maximised in supported housing and for its impact to make a significant contribution to the community.

Finally, pursuant to any recommendations as to the above being followed through, the outcome of the project – ‘increasing social capital in supported housing and in process, its contribution to the community’ – will be fulfilled. In this way, it appears that increasing social capital in supported housing is primarily concerned with implementing a structure into the support service that vulnerable homeless people are receiving, and the ultimate achievements for them will include health improvements, enhancement of learning skills to engage in the labour market and active participation in the community. Increasing social capital in supported housing and, in the process, its contribution to the community, will break the economic and social exclusion cycle that homeless people face. The successful implementation of the programme will make a significant contribution to the community in terms of crime reduction, creating meaningful activities for the young people to break their idleness. Therefore, increasing social capital in supported housing should be perceived as an agenda for changing life.

## Appendix 7 Post-Research Visit to Moonday Project

Statistic of engagements of young people at Moonday Project

Category of engagements	March 2010 % of young people's engagement	March 2011 % of young people's engagement	March 2012 % of young people's engagement based on post-research data
Health Improvement Programmes (Health, Drug & Alcohol and physical health)	65	82	78
Education (formal and informal)	25	37	43
Employment (Paid)	5	17	15
Employment	2	17	38
Welfare benefits	88	71	73
Family, friend reconnection and network of support agencies	72	81	98
Faiths	43	71	84
Community consultation	No record	17	33
Community events	39	80	78
Leisure, gym and library, picture and group activities	60	77	88

The agreement has been made to follow up the progress of the recommendations made on this research project up to year 2015. The above information was provided during a post-research visit in May 2012 and this is to re-examine the impact this research is making on the life of the young people in connection to social capital.

This project made positive difference to the life of young people homeless people at Moonday project through implementation of recommendations made on employment opportunity for the homeless people as well as maximisation of support service provision through joint working between the specialist agency and the frontline support workers. The staff management at Moonday project said that the rate of participation of the young



people in employment, education and health programme continue to increase significantly over the years and this was demonstrated in their yearly performance workbook submitted to the Supporting People via the local administrative funding authority.

The manager at Moonday project produced the statistic of performance indicator from year 2010 to date so show how changes evolved over the last 3 years. As it can be seen from the above table, the following increases realised on performance indicator from 2010 to date:

- health engagement improved by 7 per cent and this figure was taken from the statistic of young people who completed programme of support during the financial year April 2010 to March 2011. The health engagement in the financial year April to March 2012 reduced by 4 per cent due to breakdown of drug & alcohol rehabilitation programme and some numbers of mental health relapses.
- Education participation also increased from 7 per cent in the year 2011 to 8 per cent in year 2012 in comparison to the percentage of numbers of young people that engaged with formal and informal education in year 2010.
- The paid employment rate also increased by 12 per cent in 2011. The numbers of young people engaging in the paid employment went down by 2 per cent in comparison to year 2011 due to mental health breakdown. 53 per cent of young people engaged with paid and unpaid employment at the end of March 2012. However, the management set 65 per cent target of young people engaging in paid and unpaid employment programme to be achieved at the end of March 2013. This is a great challenge for the Moonday Service and they aim to achieve this target by developing more partnership programme with other key organisations in the local areas. The Moonday project recently established a partnership traineeship pilot programme with a local bank.
- Major achievement for the Moonday project is the reduction of numbers of young people on income support/JSA by 17 per cent in 2011 and 15 per cent in 2012. 2 per cent of young people went back to income support due to mental health breakdown. Support Workers said that the young people that went back to income support will be given some time to get better with their health before putting them back on employment programme.

- The percentage of young people reconnecting back to their families, establishing new social connection and engaging with network of support continue to grow from 72 per cent in 2010 to 98 per cent in 2012. The Manager commented in one of the service performance report to the management and external organisation that the reshaping of the service to social inclusion model as well as changes to the development of support plan in a person-centred approach/outcome star measurement has made significant influence on the service.
- The young people are engaging in the faith groups in the community. The faith groups made up of Christianity, Muslim and Hindus. 84 per cent of young people openly declared their engagement with the faith group in the community. The young homeless people at Moonday project are celebrating the yearly events of the faith groups that represent the numbers of young people in the borough. One of the young people said that a strong belief in his Christian faith has helped with confidence building, recognition of identity and boldness to achieve his plan. This young person said as thus 'I observe my regular prayers, the intervention of Christian faith in my life has given opportunity to become a change person in line. My behaviour has changed, I no longer join in with criminal activities, stop indulging myself with drug and now I have been able to get a job last February through a brother from my church'.
- 80 per cent of young people in March 2011 and 78 per cent of young people in March 2012 supported older people to clear their garden, helping other people and taking part in the group events in the community in comparison to 39 per cent in 2010. This is a significant shift in the integration of young people into main stream society. A support worker said during the visit that the Moonday project has attained an improved reputation in the community. The other support worker said that the relationship between the Moonday project and the Community is very healthy and this is what the community cohesion is all about.
- The young people have been attending local consultation on wider issues since June 2010 to date. Moonday Service confirmed through their personalisation report to the senior management that one the young people (tenant xxx) is a serving committee member of the local group that work on community safety initiative. This is an answer the request of the young people who said that the local

community need to give the young people a voice during the research enquiry in Chapter 7 of this project report.

- The social participation of the young homeless people in the community continue to improve year by year and this from 60 per cent in March 2010 to 77 per cent in March 2011 and 88 per cent in year 2012.
- From the above analysis of information collated during and by and large during the post-research work has indeed substantiated much discussion on how social capital is making a difference to the life of young homeless people in terms of significant improvement on the health of the people following the implementation of – recovery outcome star model referred to in Appendix 1 where young person was given opportunity to write their own objectives in a personalised support plan format. The young person was also given an opportunity to plot their outcome star with the viewing of reflecting on their recovery over the last six and the effort they are making to improve on their current situation and what they would like to do next.
- Connections of young people to employers also increase their participation in employment opportunities, as can be seen from the above post-research data. The general engagement of young people in various activities such as attendance at local consultation, engagement with local college, helping out in the community, celebration of cultural orientation including faiths are the activities required for maximising social capital in supported housing as they confirmed all the information highlighted in the literature review through the work of Putnam, Coleman, Bourdieu, Hanifan, Field, Joyce, Field, Fukuyama and other scholars.